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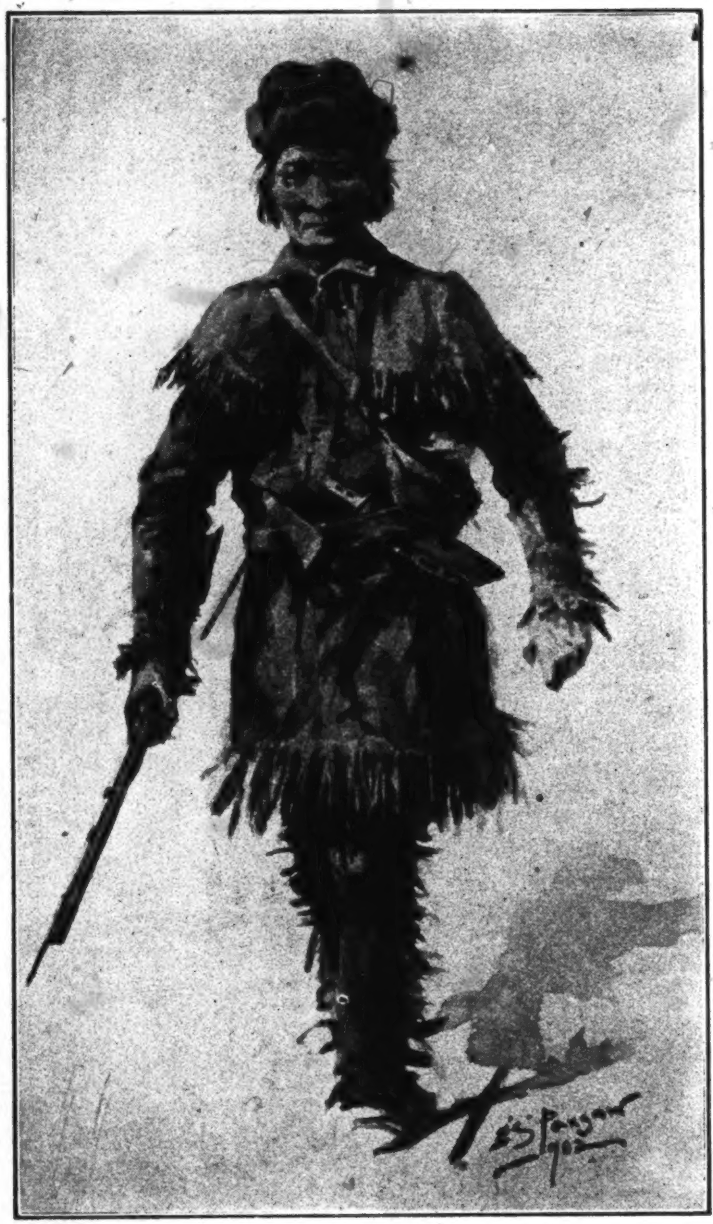

A Trailblazer —Painting by Paxson.

FOLLOWING OLD TRAILS

BY

ARTHUR L. STONE

EDITOR, THE MISSOULIAN

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

MISSOULA, MONTANA
MORTON JOHN ELROD
1913

PRESS OF
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MISSOULA
MONTANA

TO THE MONTANA PIONEERS

The men and women who blazed these trails—the finest type, I believe, of the western state-builders — this book is respectfully dedicated by

THE AUTHOR.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The plan of printing *Following Old Trails* in book form originated at a social gathering, when several persons suggested that the stories that had been running each Sunday in The Missoulian for almost a year were too valuable to be left in the files of a newspaper, and should be printed in some form that would make them accessible to the general reader, and place them permanently in libraries. So many volunteered to help in the cause that a letter was prepared and sent out to such persons as might be interested, asking for help. The response was ready and prompt. It seemed that many were of one mind, namely, that these historical descriptions of men, places and events should be saved and grouped together. In a short time it was seen that the public wanted the book, and the plan was perfected.

It would be unwise to select from the long list of advance subscribers the names of persons who have rendered help. Each contributed what he could afford. To all these kind friends most sincere appreciation is given.

Due credit for the illustrations is given with each. The Daily Missoulian has very kindly loaned several cuts of persons mentioned in the stories. Mr. E. S. Paxson, our talented home artist, has drawn special illustrations for the book. Photographs of two of his large paintings which were made for the Missoula county court house have been used, these paintings having been photographed by R. H. McKay.

I am glad to have been of service in placing these historical facts in this form. It has been a pleasure to assist the author, whose genial fellowship makes his friendship most valuable, as well as to do something for the community and the state.

MORTON J. ELROD.

University of Montana, November 22, 1913.

FOREWORD

The stories which make up this little book were written originally for The Missoulian and for a year constituted a feature of the Sunday edition. The suggestion that they be collected in permanent form came from friends who, I fear, have over-estimated their value. When it came to arranging these journeys over old Montana trails for book form, I realized more than ever that they bear evidence of the haste in which most of them were prepared. All were written under the high pressure of a daily-newspaper office and with no thought that they would ever be called back out of the old files. That they do appear, finally, in this volume is the result of the insistence of some of the friends who read them in newspaper form and had neglected to preserve those which pleased them. It has seemed best, therefore, to present them in the order of their newspaper appearance. This will account for what may seem like a failure to make a systematic arrangement of the stories. Some of these tales have been printed before in other form; some of them, as far as I know, were never in type until they appeared in The Missoulian. In consenting to their publication, I have not been unaware of their unworthiness as book material, but I have let them go in the hope that their publication may prove an incentive to the preservation, by abler pens than mine, of some of the intimate details and the personal side of the life of the men and women who, in Montana, hewed a magnificent commonwealth out of a wilderness. Every community has tales like these. They must be preserved soon or they will be lost forever. For the Montana pioneer, to whom this work is dedicated, is rapidly following that old trail over the Great Divide — the trail which leads but one way.

—A. L. S.

Missoula, Dec. 1, 1913.

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THE ROAD TO HAMILTON

IN ALL western Montana—and that means in all the world—there is no more beautiful trail than that which leads from Missoula to Hamilton. It was always a pleasant trail to travel, even when the old Sun Cure train consumed seven hours in the passage, and time has destroyed none of its native beauty while it has added many new charms. Always beautiful, yet never exactly the same, the trail up the Bitter Root furnishes as delightful a jaunt as any traveler ever made.

Back in 1894 it was my good fortune to pilot Dr. Elliott Coues of the Smithsonian Institution up through the Bitter Root valley and, with a military escort from the old Twenty-fifth infantry, we traced the trail which was made by the first white travelers who ever toured the Bitter Root—Dr. Coues was then engaged in his investigation of the route of Lewis and Clark. Dr. Coues was a famous globetrotter. He had scaled the Alps and had climbed the Himalayas; he had traversed Africa and had explored Greenland. The famous scenery of the world was an open-book to him. But when he saw the sunrise tint the Bitter Root mountains one morning, he exclaimed: "I have never seen anything in my life more beautiful than that." So, when anyone questions my estimate of the beauties of the Bitter Root trail, I fall back upon the excellent authority of Dr. Coues.

It was some time before that journey with Dr. Coues that I made my first trip over the trail to Hamilton. It was while I was making my tenderfoot tours of western Montana that I climbed aboard the old Sun Cure train one afternoon with Charles M. Crutchfield and went up to Hamilton to keep an appointment with Marcus Daly. Both these men have since traveled the Long Trail which crosses the Great Divide, but I shall never forget that trip in which they both figured and which gave me my introduction to a country which has since become my home and which is the home of so many of my best friends.

Those two friends were good friends of western Montana—there were never any better—and it is one of the proud memories of my life that they were my friends, too. My first night in the Bitter Root was spent beneath the roof of Mr. Daly on the farm which he afterward made famous wherever good horses are known and loved. It was he who first made the Bitter Root famous and this is something of which we should not lose sight in these days of publicity advertising. That night, seated before an open fire of big logs, Mr. Daly told us some of his plans for the "ranch." Those plans included some of the details which it was left to others to work out regarding the Bitter Root, but Mr. Daly lived long enough to see his predictions verified as to the productiveness of the bench lands which were at that time left to range cattle as pasture.

Hamilton was new then and the Bitter Root farm had but begun to reveal the splendid advantages which it was to demonstrate, later. But it was all beautiful, even then, and it is never possible for me entirely to disassociate Mr. Daly and the Bitter Root. There have been many men whose service in the development of the valley has been notable, but it will always seem to me that the man of them all to whom the valley owes the greatest debt was Marcus Daly.

Last Sunday evening I walked several miles over the roads of the Daly farms, roads which I had once traveled with the man who made the ranch. I do not believe I shall ever do it again. It made me homesick—I like to think of the big farm as Mr. Daly left it and it is not that way any more. There was never much commercialism about the farm when Mr. Daly was at its head. There is a good deal of it in evidence now. But I have no doubt that, had Mr. Daly been spared to develop fully his plans, the great place would have proved profitable. It would have been profitable upon the splendid scale in which it was conceived and planned. But there is nobody now who could carry out that plan; the mind which formed it was the one which would have perfected it.

But the Daly farm is magnificent now. It presents another phase of the valley's possibilities than that which it was designed to show but it stands as the great example of the possibilities of irrigation in the Bitter Root. It was the great experiment farm upon which were worked out many problems which, when solved, revolutionized the farming of the Bitter Root and which made possible the present greatness of the valley and its more splendid future. The tourist of the valley should see the Daly farm, by all means, but the man who knew this farm when its great promoter was living would better not visit it now if he wishes to spare himself a heartache.

But, to revert to that years-ago first journey of mine up the Bitter Root. I remember that the brakeman lighted the lamps in the car just before we reached Stevensville. We had left Missoula in the middle of the afternoon. "Crutch" was telling me tales of the valley and its people—he was an oldtimer of two years' residence then—when we stopped at Stevensville station.

A man entered and, the car being crowded, asked if he might share our seats. He was welcomed and Crutchfield introduced me to "Dud" Bass. Since then I have learned to know this man well and to esteem highly his splendid service to the horticultural interests of the valley. That night he made me acquainted with the big Alexander apple of the Bitter Root. The ride had been long and I was hungry. I presume I said so. I don't remember just what led up to it, but I do remember Mr. Bass' pulling a great, red apple out of his gripsack and telling me to eat it. It was the biggest apple I had ever seen. I have seen bigger ones since but none of them have ever looked as big as that one did.

And then Mr. Bass told me about his orchard and of his plans for a great fruit business in the valley. Those plans matured perfectly. Mr. Bass, by honest dealing and careful orcharding, gave the Bitter Root apple a reputation which not even the crooked methods of some of his contemporaries was able to destroy. He has retired from active business now. He lives in a beautiful home in Stevensville, resting upon the honors which he so splendidly won. I have always been glad that it was he who gave me my first intimate acquaintance with the Bitter Root apple.

These are the three men whom I remember in connection with that first trip up the Bitter Root over the trail to Hamilton—Marcus Daly, Charlie Crutchfield and D. C. Bass. I met a lot of others, but the incidents in which these three figured are the ones which I recall distinctly when I think of that pleasant jaunt. And it was these incidents which passed through my mind, last Sunday afternoon, as I traveled again the trail to Hamilton.

All along the trail there have been many changes. Some of the old landmarks are gone, but the beauty of the river is unchanged and the grandeur of the peaks remains. There are orchards now where there was forest then and there are broad fields of grain where there was only bunch grass, years ago. Rude cabins have been replaced by handsome farmhouses and the cayuse stock has yielded place to as fine harness horses as can be seen in any valley. Viewed from the standpoint of the husbandman, the valley along the trail is delightfully bettered. And the improvement is not finished, not by any means.

And, as with the trail, so with the town at its southern end. The Hamilton of today is vastly different from the Hamilton of the nineties. It was a baby town then but it possessed all the elements which go to make a good town and it has abundantly justified the faith of its friends of those days. They used to call Hamilton a one-man town; they roasted it as a company town; they said all the mean things about it they could think of. But Hamilton didn't mind them. Hamilton just kept on growing.

The friends of Hamilton knew that, all about them, was the greatest farm and orchard region in the world. They knew they would come into their own some day. They knew that the development of the region about them would bring growth to their town; they knew that the scenic beauties of their location would one day make Hamilton famous as a summer resort. And they just kept on growing.

Then came the discovery of the Bitter Root by the easterners. It was Sam Dinsmore who led the first party of these discoverers into the Bitter Root; Sam's enthusiasm was infectious and when he had led his party of explorers over the trail to Hamilton and then had doubled back with them, each one of the party was boosting for the Bitter Root. Out of that trip over the old trail came the magnificent development work of the Bitter Root Valley Irrigation company and the other concerns which followed it into the valley.

Within four years, the Bitter Root valley has practically doubled its acreage. It has not yet stopped growing. There will presently be acres farmed which are now absolutely wild. The growth of the valley will continue—don't make any mistake about that. As I journeyed over the old trail this week, I was specially interested in noting the way the timber line is being crowded back. Grain fields and orchards lie away up on the hillsides and are extending their line of advance each month. The boom of the dynamite as it blasts the stumps from the old woodland is heard regularly. The pall of smoke from the fires which are clearing the brushland is the banner of the advancing line of cultivation. The spirit of progress is everywhere at work.

One could write on and on for hours about the scenes along the trail to Hamilton and then half would not be told. The endless variety of the natural resources along this route and their magnificent extent make the Bitter Root the great valley that it is. Its wonderful climate, its wonderful soil, its wonderful water courses, its wonderful scenery—all these make it the great valley of them all. Name a single attribute of the Oregon valleys and you will find it duplicated in the Bitter Root. Name all the advantages of the Washington valleys—they are all here. And there is none of the dust and wind in the Bitter Root. More than that, you can take all of these valleys of the state to the west of us, bunch them together and place them in the Bitter Root and then have more area left than they have.

But the best way to learn is to see for yourself. Take the train some afternoon at Missoula or climb into an automobile and run up over the admirable roads of the valley—make the jaunt yourself and you will see a picture that cold type cannot reproduce, a scene that baffles the skill of the painter. And at the end of the journey you will find a welcome that, of itself, will make you glad you came.

To sojourn at the Ravalli hotel in Hamilton is ample recompense for the effort of the journey. To sit upon its shaded porches and listen to the word pictures of the hotel's owner is to become right away a booster. For there is no more loyal, sincere friend of the valley than J. O. Read. He makes your stay happy, he makes your acquaintance with the Bitter Root complete. He and J. E. Totman of the big sawmill are types of the present-day Bitter Root man. They are delightful companions, they are earnest citizens, they are the best friends a fellow ever could have.

And thus it is that the journey's end is the happiest part of the jaunt over the trail to Hamilton, happy as that jaunt is sure to be. There's comfort and immense satisfaction in a stay at the end of this journey. The country itself makes it pleasant and the welcome that awaits the traveler intensifies the enjoyment. It's the Hamilton way. It is the manifestation of the spirit which was awakened by Marcus Daly and which is kept alive by as fine a bunch of men as ever labored for the perfection of a good idea. When you have traveled the Hamilton trail you will discover that this idea is to make the most of the greatest advantages which a generous Creator ever bestowed upon any community in this world. And you will find that they are doing it on the square.

July 1, 1911.

THE FRENCHTOWN ROAD

THERE is much that is interesting along the old trail that leads to Frenchtown. This road is one of the oldest trails in western Montana; it was a thoroughfare long before there was any Missoula and it has played a considerable part in the development of this section of the State. Over this trail moved the commerce of the early days between Montana camps and Walla Walla, which was the coast terminus of the packtrain days. Over this trail traveled missionary and miner, priest and pariah, trapper and tourist. Over this trail one day came pursuers and pursued racing from the vigilante court in Alder gulch, the one seeking to enforce the stern decree of that tribunal and the other desperately endeavoring to evade the service of the hempen writ. The race went to the side of justice and at old Hell Gate town the mandate of the court was executed and three human forms wriggled and then were still, suspended from the high crossbar of an old gate. That was the last vigilante execution in Montana. It is but a few years since the three mounds which marked the graves of the victims of this law enforcement were leveled by plow and harrow.

Over the Frenchtown trail moved the immigration of the thrifty farmers who settled the lower valley and whose nationality gave the ronde its name. Their energy and thrift, too, gave this region its fame as a farming district; they didn't talk much but they farmed a great deal and their produce became in a short time a demonstration of the agricultural possibilities of this section. French was the local language along this old trail then and it is yet; the descendants of these people remain on the old farms; they have preserved their entity wonderfully well; their community remains French to this day in many of its customs and practices, though there is no one who will say that these men and women are not mighty good Americans.

Over the Frenchtown trail moved the chasers of the will-o'-the-wisp in the famous Cedar creek stampede and over this trail came back much of the wealth of gold which was washed out of that great old gulch. There are dark chapters and there are bright chapters in the history of the Frenchtown road. Always it has been well-beaten—this trail—since it was blazed and now it is a busy thoroughfare. Here and there are traces of the life of former days; here and there may be seen some of the old houses, landmarks which are monuments to the first occupants of this fertile region.

Down a little way from Missoula on the Frenchtown trail is the site of old Hell Gate town, the first settlement in the Missoula valley—really the mother of Missoula. There are one or two of the old cabins of the town yet standing—outhouses at a ranch. Here was the old store of Worden & Company, the pioneer mercantile establishment of this valley, the store in which Judge Woody served as clerk in the early days. Here was started the town which was deserted when the water power of the Rattlesnake caused the removal of the settlement after Missoula Mills had been created. There are a good many stories connected with this old town—some of them have never been told and some of them will never be told, but if you are fortunate enough to travel the Frenchtown trail with an oldtimer some day, you may get some of them that will entertain you and will enlighten, as well. For there were doings at old Hell Gate in those days.

There are many farms along the trail which will suggest interesting incidents to your oldtimer companion. If you want to get them don't ride in an automobile—travel behind a jogging horse and the suggestions will not come so fast that their impressions will be lost. There is the old Winters ranch; it has been famous in its day for the fast horses that have had their homes here. There is the Austin ranch, too, and on the other side of the road there are the tall, green trees that shade the hospitable homestead of the Flynn farm, beyond which are the old Hogan and England ranches.

There is the White farm—everybody in western Montana has heard of that. In this farmhouse, yet standing in its old place, four sons were born who were natives of four different states, though the house was never moved an inch. The development of the northwest was shifting territorial boundaries rapidly in those days and, though the house was not moved, the sons were, respectively, natives of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana. And the old house is yet there, near the famous spring which is the delight of picnickers and fishermen alike.

Halfway down the Frenchtown trail is Grass Valley, which remained for so many years a contented, prosperous community of farmers, near enough to a railway to be comfortable, but far enough away not to be annoyed, until the Milwaukee, pushing westward, threw up a high embankment which separates the valley into halves, its rude, gray walls rising like a bulwark. Cyr, Deschamps, Dussault, Palin, Hamel—these are names which at once suggest themselves as you see Grass Valley or as you read of it. These and many others are intimately connected with the delightful pastoral history of this section, where have been bred fine horses and where has been raised fine grain for almost half a century. Sturdy men and beautiful women are here, born and reared within the confines of this pleasing vale. The Cyr hotel, a celebrated road inn, stands pleasantly beneath the shade of tall poplars and, across the trail, is the substantial schoolhouse of the district.

At two world's fairs the gold medal, won in competition with the farmers of the whole earth, the gold medals for oats and hay have been awarded to the products of Grass Valley; it is a famous piece of farm land but its people bear their honors modestly. They knew for a good many years that they had the best oats and hay in the world and they do not see any reason for making a fuss about it just because the world at large has discovered what they knew for so long.

A few miles below the Grass Valley hotel, the basin narrows almost to the width of the river channel. Then suddenly it widens again into the broad expanse of the Frenchtown valley, a replica of the one above. In every direction, even up on the hillsides, stretch the waving seas of grass and grain. There are substantial farm homes scattered all about. Thrift is everywhere visible and manifest. And in the midst of it is Frenchtown, a place that is worth knowing.

Frenchtown— the name suggests Jack Demers and his gracious hospitality, General Marion and his courtly greeting—these and the old-time celebration of St. John's day. Never can celebration of this holiday be the same held anywhere else than at Frenchtown, no matter how modern the facilities. For St. John's day belongs to Frenchtown. There it encounters no alien atmosphere. There it is in its own environment. There nothing seems strange that looks peculiar elsewhere.

Nobody who has had the enjoyment of participation in a celebration of the French holiday at Frenchtown will question this. Frenchtown and St. John's day are inseparable in the mind of all who have shared the happiness of this occasion. For nearly half a century, once a year, the Frenchtown trail has been hot with the rush of travel on the 24th of June. This year found the trend of travel away from Frenchtown upon this occasion, but it is not likely to occur again. The Frenchmen had a good time, but it was not the old Day of St. John.

Frenchtown has changed but not so much that there are not reminders of the old town; on all sides there are suggestions of the jovial Jack Demers, whose hospitable home was always open to the wayfarer and at whose table there was ever a plate for the stranger or the friend who came unannounced; of General Joe Marion, who will be remembered as long as the name of Frenchtown endures; of Peter Scheffer, pioneer farmer and successful business man; of scores of oldtimers who have been making hay, history and happiness in this beautiful valley for two generations.

Frenchtown has grown. It has grown attractive and prosperous with the continued development of the wonderfully rich region about it. But it retains enough of its individuality to make it Frenchtown still. If you are in quest of local color and human interest, visit Frenchtown. Visit the old place as a friend, not as a critic. Its people will receive you with the rare hospitality which has ever characterized the place; they will bid you welcome and they will share with you what they have. It is a delightfully interesting place.

All along the Frenchtown trail there are farms; there is nothing else to divide interest or to share attention. They are thrifty farms, the grass and grain wave high—the air is heavy with the perfume of the blossoming clover. High in the air the lark sings his song of joy, in the grass the baby grouse rush to cover, in the hedges broods of young ducks scurry to shelter.

The drone of insects hums on every side and induces slumber. As your horse jogs on, your head nods and you are almost asleep. The click of the mower arouses you for the season of growth is reaching its climax and the heavy crop is ready for the harvest. As I drove along the Frenchtown trail this week, the harvest was just beginning; the clover hay was being cut. The yield will be great this year. Never before did the fields of these fertile valleys bear upon their bosom such a wealth.

There is justice in the policy which has selected the Frenchtown trail for the scientific road-building of this year. This old trail should be made a good one. And that is what it is getting to be. The great steam roller and grader has been working its way up from Huson on the lower edge of the valley, toward Missoula. Before the season's work is done, the old trail will be a boulevard. It will be a strange experience to drive over this historic route and not encounter the cumbering gumbo clay, but it is disappearing beneath a heavy covering of white gravel. It will be a pleasanter drive but there will be no loss of charm or interest.

Always this jaunt will be delightful; always it will be remindful of the past and ever it will be suggestive of the possibilities of the future. It is a jaunt that is ripe for July. Take it and you will be glad you spared the time. You will come home with renewed confidence in the future of this region; your faith in its people will be strengthened; you will understand better how it is that western Montana is becoming great and is destined to become greater.

And, as you pass the monuments of early days in the ronde, you will see what has made western Montana strong. You will understand as your mind goes back over the history of this valley, why there has been naught but a forward movement. For you will see in the story of the past and in the realities of the present the men of industry and perseverance whose close application and indomitable courage has made this a land of productiveness and a region of law-abiding citizenry. There is much along the Frenchtown trail that is calculated to make you want to take the jaunt again. It had been trodden a good many years when I first journeyed over it in 1892, but it has been traveled more constantly since. And its travel will ever be more and more constant and important. The past of the Frenchtown trail is rich but there is greater importance in its future. One will have to travel often to keep pace with the development there.

July 8, 1911.

THE CORIACAN DEFILE

THERE is nobody about here — red or white — who can remember when there was not a trail up through O'Keeffe canyon into the Jocko valley. When the first whites came to western Montana, there was a path through this picturesque defile, worn deep by the passing of moccasined feet. It was then an Indian highway and the marks of travois poles were sharp upon its winding course; it was the route between the Missoula valley and the lake country. Here had passed the hunting parties of the reds; here had sojourned their women on the yearly quest for the bitter root which was the staple food of these aborigines; here had moved the tribal trains upon expeditions of peace and of war; here had the Black Robes made their way, carrying the message of the cross to the hungry souls of the Indians of the beautiful valleys to the westward.

Until the advent of the railway, this route was not the main-traveled road to the coast; the packers went up the St. Regis river, over into the Coeur d'Alene country in the late winter and during high water, this canyon route was used to the coast; but the trail up the narrow pass to the north was ever busy with the travel of the Indian and, later, with local commerce. But the railway surveyors ran their line by the northern route; they spanned the narrow defiles with high bridges and climbed the side of the mountains which overlook the narrow rift that forms this truly beautiful pass. They made of the canyon a new thoroughfare of commerce but nature forced them to keep so far away from the dashing stream that the beauty of the pass was not marred and it yet possesses the charm which for half a century called forth expressions of admiration from lovers of the beautiful.

The establishing of the Flathead reservation gave new importance to the trail through the canyon and, eventually, it was widened into a wagon road. At best, it was a tough road to travel. Ledges of shale shelved across it, slippery, and uneven, affording insecure footing for horses and a precarious track for wheels. Each spring a freshet gullied the road so that it was impassable for weeks. A beautiful trail it was, but not comfortable. It is different now. It is yet a beautiful road over which to travel. The good-roads spirit has worked here with wonderfully fine results.

As I have said before, he who travels these old trails of western Montana with the purpose to get the most out of the jaunt, should either walk or take a horse; the automobile skips some of the most interesting features of these journeys; it goes too fast. Firm in this belief, I accepted the other day an invitation from Major Morgan of the Flathead agency and drove up to see the Indian dances. Two horses furnished the motive power for our journey and, though the autos whizzed past us in the canyon, I believe we had a pleasanter trip than did the folks who rode by gasoline. But this is a mere matter of taste—and smell.

The day was perfect. Overhead was a cloudless July sky, out of which the sun worked so effectively as to register the year's maximum temperature before the day was over; but in the densely-shaded canyon there was little penetration by the heat and the ride was one long delight. The roads, I have said, were excellent. Out into the bright morning swung the team, across the valley to DeSmet, which is at the foot of the pass and which bears the name of the first Black Robe to traverse the trail through the canyon, the brave young priest who had left all that he had of earthly ties to bring the Gospel to this region. It was a glorious drive.

Around DeSmet the dry-farmer holds sway. This is his year and his realm is beautiful. For miles there stretch away in every direction the great fields of waving grain. It is but a very few years since it was discovered that these rolling foothills could be farmed to advantage; less than five years ago, most of them were held, if held at all, for pasturage. Now their slopes are heavy with ripening crops. It is a happy sight to stand on the hill beyond DeSmet and look out over this great sea of grain. In western Montana, with the exception of the reservation district, there is no region which emphasizes more forcibly than this, the great development which is taking place.

Up and around the DeSmet hill the road is wide and smooth; the climb is not irksome and when the summit is reached the traveler beholds the splendid vale into which the canyon widens, with its rich farms, its great orchards and its hundreds of thousands of newly-planted trees. It is a sight to kindle intense admiration. It is a picture of peace and plenty such as is seldom seen.

The principal feature of this basin is the old O'Keeffe ranch, now known as Fruitvale. Ever since 1861 this valley and the canyon back of it have been intimately associated, in one way or another, with the affairs of Missoula county. It was in the fall of 1861 that The O'Keeffe, Baron O'Keeffe he was and right royally he bore the title, located this body of land and reared his rooftree there. Later O'Keeffe became a member of the territorial legislature and he was chairman of the commissioners of Missoula county during an important period of the county's existence.

There is no end to the stories which are told of The O'Keeffe and they're all good ones. The splendid farm which now spreads its broad acres over this vale and extends back into the canyon behind is evidence of the excellent judgment of this soldier of fortune who, after having traveled the world over, drove his stakes at the mouth of the canyon which now bears his name. He was a gentleman and a scholar; he was Irish to the backbone and he had a stiff backbone. He was ponderous in his oratory, flowery in his speech and fond of full-sounding words. He it was who gave to this canyon the name, Coriacan defile, which it bore for many years.

Judge Woody told me this story of the origin of the name: Neil MacArthur was a Hudson Bay company factor who afterward went into trading for himself on the old emigrant road. He was in charge of one of the old Hudson Bay "brigades" which had been an expedition from the post to an Indian camp down near where Frenchtown is. He had had a successful trading season and was returning to the post over the old trail. One of his men was a Kanaka, named Koriaka, and this man rode the bell mare at the head of the line. In the canyon, as the "brigade" was returning to the post, it was waylaid by a war party of Blackfeet in the little gulch where the Marent trestle is built. The ambush was not a success, as the Blackfeet did not wait for the main body of the "brigade," but shot Koriaka as he came into sight on the trail. The following line at once fell back, raillied and drove back the hostiles. There was no other life lost than that of the poor Kanaka and the canyon was given his name. The old Indian name seems to have been entirely lost; whatever it was, it was superseded by the name "Koriaka's canyon," and this it retained until The O'Keeffe rounded it out into "The Coriacan defile."

But there was too much individuality about this Irish baron for any other name than his to be applied to any place where he was and soon the basin was known as "O'Keeffe's place," and the defile became "O'Keeffe's canyon," by which name it is yet called. Poor Koriaka was not important enough to be retained in history, even though he gave his life to win a place there. The Celtic force asserted itself; it was the survival of the fittest.

From the crest of the DeSmet hill, the road winds through the grain fields and pastures down to the basin where the water has been spread out from the canyon's flow, over orchard and garden until a splendid place has developed, which will one day become one of the famous orchard districts of this region. T. T. Black has developed an elaborate irrigation system here and has transformed the hillsides into great orchard tracts through which the old trail winds its way to the canyon beyond.

Past the ranch of The O'Keeffe and the ranch of David O'Keeffe, his brother, both farms now absorbed into one, the trail takes its way; it is a delightful drive. The handsome house and the spacious barns of this home ranch stand just about where The O'Keeffe built his primal cabin in 1861. He had come here with Lieutenant Mullan, building the famous Mullan trail, in 1859. The party had wintered that year in quarters built near DeBorgia on the St. Regis de Borgia river and from there had carried on the construction work of the year, building during that winter the hill road between Superior and St. Regis. This done, the party had been taken to Fort Benton and disbanded. But The O'Keeffe remained here. The Mullan pack horses had been wintered in the Bitter Root, the Jocko and in this basin at the mouth of the canyon, which was afterward to bear The O'Keeffe's name. He had seen the land and it had looked good; so he took his discharge from government service before the return to Benton and remained here.

It was at the cabin of The O'Keeffe that the pursuing Vigilantes overtook Bob Zachery after they had hanged Johnnie Cooper, Alex Carter and Si Skinner at old Hell Gate. The baron had been entertaining Zachery unaware of the identity of his guest and the household was wrapped in slumber when the Vigilantes came up and demanded their man. They got him without trouble and they were for hanging Zachery at once, then and there.

There are two stories told to explain why the Zachery execution was not held on the O'Keeffe place. One is that The O'Keeffe, hurriedly called from bed and with his stalwart proportions concealed only by the folds of a shirt, exhausted his powers of argument and of oratory before he could convince the Vigilantes that he "would see ghosts forever" if Zachery were hanged there; the executioners, however, were finally convinced and they took their man back to Hell Gate for the final ceremony. The other story is that Dave O'Keeffe came out of his cabin, across the trail, and at the point of a gun drove the Vigilantes and their prisoner from the soil of the O'Keeffe clan. The weight of evidence is in favor of the former tale. At any rate, there is no record of any ghosts having disturbed the peace of this beautiful valley.

It is a wonderfully fertile spot, this valley at the mouth of the canyon. The trail leads up the gentle slope after passing the O'Keeffe place and then a turn swings the traveler into the narrow gorge. The vegetation is fairly tropical in its density here; the trees and the ferns and the flowers crowd close into the trail, brushing the wagon as you pass along. Behind this wall of verdure on one side, the farmer has crowded the line of his cultivation close to the line of the trail; on the other side, the mountain wall rises almost sheer. The canyon's stream dashes noisily along beneath overhanging foliage and scores of living springs send their little streams across the trail. Great pines make eolian music high above, a subdued accompaniment to the summer songs which are trilled in the meadows and thickets below. It is one of the most beautiful spots in a region of great scenic charm.

The dew was yet heavy upon grass and leaf as we swung into the canyon's entrance the other morning; the summer sun had just found its way into the cleft in the hills; there was fragrance everywhere. The horses felt the inspiration and didn't recognize the uphill of the way. The trail itself has been made into a splendid road during the last two years and adds to the comfort and enjoyment of the drive. There was a fleeting glimpse of the lofty Marent trestle high in the air, spanning the gulch where poor Koriaka lost his life and gave the pass a name; there was a cheery salutation from the pretty little farmhouse which nestles beneath the walls of this gulch; and then we were in the narrow pass.

There was no company the rest of the way up the trail except two passing automobiles going up and two others which were coming down. It was just ourselves and nature—ourselves, enjoying every foot of the way, and nature in her happiest mood. We had almost forgotten there was such a thing as a railway in the world when the last turn in the defile brought us out into the Evaro meadows. A crossing of the track, a swing through the little railway town at the summit another crossing and then the trail led into the glorious timber belt.

The ride through the timber was a continuation of the delights of the pass. The panorama was different, but was no whit less beautiful. The great pines and firs, the thickets of the undergrowth, the grassy parks along the way—all these made the morning delightful, and a refreshing breeze swept down from the Mission mountains, enhancing the comfort of the hour.

In a beautiful open park on Finley creek we camped for dinner. It was fine and all did justice to it. The horses were rested and we were refreshed. The little campfire was thoroughly drenched and we struck out again for the agency. Through the timber again. The road was good for the greater part of way but the recent rains had left some chuckholes in one of which one of our automobile precursors had been stuck. There are long loops in this road, where the trail finds an easy way down the hill, but they are all well graded and not the least dangerous. It was a fine drive.

The horses were in fine fettle after their rest and romped down this slope as if there were not 20 miles behind them. And so, on and out of the timber. The timber line is sharply drawn and the trail emerges suddenly into the Jocko valley. We turned a curve and there, in the midst of the valley, was the camp of 60 lodges grouped about the dance tent. For a moment we could fancy that time had rolled back half a century and that we were drifting down toward an old-time camp of the reds. But there were intervening fences and fields of grain which soon dispelled the dream and we drove on through the winding lanes. The old, straight-cut road which I used to know across this valley is all fenced now and it is a long way around sometimes.

Just where the trail emerges from the timber, there is one of its famous stretches which has not been effaced by the farmer. It is the "Course de Femmes," a straight, level piece of road about which the old-timers tell an interesting story. The name was given to the place, they say, back in the forties when the Hudson Bay traders were getting acquainted with the Indians. One of these traders was Francois Armintinger and he arrived with his party in the Jocko valley while a party of Flatheads was camped there. The Indians had a fine stock of furs and skins and Armintinger was anxious to detain them in order that he might do some trading.

He selected a lot of his gaudiest stock, cloth, trinkets and beads and placed it all in a glittering heap, the Indians the while watching him with keen interest. Especially did the women and the girls crowd about with eager concern. When he had the stuff displayed to good advantage, Armintinger stated his plan. He proposed that the Indian women should run a race and that the winner should receive all the stuff in the pile. Born gamblers that they are, the Indians assented and the women and girls made ready for the race. There were forty of them in line when the word was given. Armintinger used to describe the race with keen zest.

The wife of Charlie La Moose won the race. The course was to a pine tree and back, along the beaten trail, a total distance of two and a half miles. The La Moose woman was young and handsome, a popular member of the tribe and something of a runner for the story goes that she had the bunch distanced before the turn was reached and that she ran the last quarter so fast that mounted Indians, following along the side of the course, had to use their quirts to keep pace with her fleet feet. She was given the trinkets and Armintinger, a shrewd man, presented consolation prizes to all the racers. He had the good will of the tribe, right there, and he traded most successfully.

As we drove over this stretch of the trail, this old story came back to me. When we got to the dance tent at the Indian camp, we found Joe La Moose, dignified grandson of the red-skinned Atalanta, leading in the dance.

It was the end of a delightful journey over one of the most beautiful in all the broad scope of western Montana. It is a trail that is so close to Missoula that it should be more popular, for the road is good and the scenes along the way are charming.

July 15, 1911.

TRAMPING INTO WINDFALL

THE miner did not blaze the first trails in western Montana but when he did get to tramping through these hills, he made some paths that were important in their day and are, in some instances, pretty thoroughly traveled yet. Into Bear gulch he wore a trail that was the transport route for enough gold to have paved every inch of it. Into Cedar creek he blazed a path that was famous the world over and from this trail other trails digressed which led the goldseekers to the treasure which they sought. Into California gulch, into Oregon and over Hungry Hollow into Deep creek. Trout creek, Windfall, Ohio, Sunrise, Meadow and Quartz—all these creeks and their canyons were traversed and not so long ago that the trails are not yet visible and there are many of them that are yet used for their original purpose. There are more men working through the summer months in the gulches of the Bitter Root range than Missoula people realize. The oldtimers did not get all the treasure from the golden sands of these Missoula county gulches; it is yet yielded up before the insistent and persistent diggers who are dredging and ground-sluicing as long as the flow of water gives them the means each summer.

It is surprising—the number of men who are at work in the hills of Missoula county; there are crews of them in some of the gulches; in others of the canyons, the miners are working singly, slowly sluicing and more slowly cleaning their bedrock, all through the spring and summer. Journeying over these old trails, one finds them most unexpectedly, and they are always glad to see the visitor. The miner's welcome is always cordial and a share of the store of grub in his cabin is always placed before the traveler. And how hungry the miner is for the news from the outside! He asks questions as fast as he can talk and his first query is usually a pretty good index to the thoughts which have been running through his mind since his last visit to the postoffice.

Last week I tramped in the sunshine over one of the oldest trails in the Bitter Root mountains. One man could not wait to tell me he was glad to see me, so anxious was he to know who won the big prizefight on the Fourth. At the next camp, the first question that was fired was about the earthquake in San Francisco—some wireless report had reached that remote camp to the effect that the Golden Gate had been destroyed by a shake. One man wanted to know if Lorimer had been fired out of the senate and another was interested to know if the war in Mexico was finished. It was mighty interesting to answer these questions and to note the effect of the replies. Wolgast had been the favorite with most of the miners; every one of them was on record as against Lorimer and most of them were pulling for the overthrow of Diaz. They were willing to talk at any length on the news of the outside but it was a different matter when I tried to get them to tell me something about their work—they said it was nothing that anybody cared to know about; there was nothing in it that was not just the same every day and there had been such a good run of water this season that they hadn't had any time to go fishing.

In the crews in these hills, ground-sluicing or dredging or hydraulicing, there are boys of eighteen and there are gray-headed veterans who were in the procession which first moved over these trails, fifty years ago, and who have been digging in these gulches ever since. To the former, the operations of today are merely a commercial proposition. To the oldtimers the present-day work is the last chapter in the story of the pursuit of gold; to them the gulches are peopled with memories of the past; they live and work among the ghosts of the days of long ago; They forget that the streets of the old stampede towns are grass-grown now and that the old cabins which lined those streets are crumbling and rotting. Daily they work in the gulches; each summer they clean up the bedrock which they have washed; probably the cleanup is sufficient to insure another year of comfort in the old cabin which has been home for so many years; if it is not, there is a tragedy unless some more fortunate man of the former days comes to the rescue with a grubstake. There is a good deal that is pathetic in what one sees as he traverses these old trails of the miner. There is a lot that is pleasant, too.

Last week I went over the old trail from Quartz into Windfall and Trout creek and then up toward the Top o'Deep. I climbed over the Sunrise pass and went up into Ohio gulch. I saw a lot of the oldtimers and I saw some others who are not so old, but who are making the dirt fly just the same. It was a trip that I shall always remember. I had been over the trail before but I saw a lot this time that I hadn't seen before. This time I walked—perhaps that's why I saw so much. I had always ridden before. It was a complete demonstration of my theory that the best way to see a region is to walk through it. I saw all there was to see on this trip. If I could only tell all that I saw, I am sure this would be the most entertaining story ever written, for I never enjoyed a trip and never saw such beauty in the hills as I did last week, tramping into Windfall.

For a long time I had been promising A. M. Stevens that I would make him a visit at his camp in Windfall. Last week, with the city commission elected, I felt that Missoula could get along without me for a few days and I set out to keep that promise. I had a real tenderfoot who wanted to see some placer mining and there was no better place that I knew of than Windfall, where he could see a lot of it. So we started out.

There were to be two saddle horses for us at Quartz, but the wires got crossed in some way and there was only one. We decided that I was too heavy and needed exercise, so the Tenderfoot mounted the old white mare and I walked. If there is anything anybody wants to know about the trail to Windfall, I can tell it to him. The thermometer at Dickson's store at Quartz registered 90 degrees when we pulled out up the coulee. There was no thermometer on the sunny side of the slopes that we traversed and I don't dare tell how hot it seemed. But there were long intervals of cool shade and there is a big spring at the foot of the trail over Sunrise creek, where the old man Perkins is yet washing out dust—and these breaks in the trail make it mighty pleasant. The shade is so refreshing and the water is so cool and good that it is worth the steep climb between, just to enjoy them.

It was late in the sixties that the rush of California miners poured into the Idaho diggings and peopled the valleys on the other side of the Bitter Root mountains. It was early in the seventies that Louis Barrette and his companions discovered gold on Cedar creek on the Montana side of the range. The trails in the Bitter Roots radiate from the first trail into Cedar. There are hundreds of them; they are blazed with blasted hopes and they are measured by bitter disappointments; but there were millions in dust taken out of these gulches, just the same. Alternating with the men who had missed the rich bars, came the men who had struck it rich and there was many a well-filled sack packed out over the same trails that were traversed by those whose hearts were the only heavy load borne over the hills. It is the story which tells itself all along the trail, even now.

Out of Quartz the trail is broad. It is a wagon road along Meadow creek, past Bob Kitching's ranch beyond the schoolhouse, with the Donley and the Snow farms off on the other side. It is easy moving until the path turns off in the dense cedar and swings up toward the crossing of Sunrise pass. Through cedar and fir, brushing dense brakes of fern and thickets of syringa and roses, this beginning of the old trail is delightful; the air was fresh and sweet as we entered this narrow way; the leaves were moist and there was fragrance all along until we got to Big Spring. I thought of this coolness and fragrance a good many times before we got to the top of the hill. I drank deep at the spring. Then I unbuttoned my collar and rolled up my sleeves and we started up the hill.

The tail of that old white mare was firmly rooted, else it would have been pulled out for she towed me up the steepest parts of the range to the top of Sunrise pass. The trail winds along the sides of the hills, loop after loop and swing after swing, but always rising. There's a steep pitch as it leaves the spring and then it settles into a steady rise until the final precipice is reached that takes you up to the jumping-off place. It is climb, climb, climb—all the way climb.

As altitude is attained, the syringa and the roses disappear along the trail and the cedars are left behind; but there is a generous growth of pines and plenty of underbrush; and the flowers of the lower stages are replaced by others no less beautiful. There is only one queer thing about the Sunrise trail. That is the way the summit backs away from you. Every time you breast a steep pitch, you are sure you are gaining the top; you divert the course of the perspiration that is running down into your eyes, you look out and—there's another steep pitch just ahead.

They say there were more prospectors lost in these hills than in any other stampede's history, and it is easy to believe—the hills all look alike for miles. For a long way, Meadow creek babbles audibly hundreds of feet below at the foot of the steepest sort of a hill. One misstep would send a horse rolling down into the wet. Stevens had a horse make the trip down the hill when he was packing his first supplies into Windfall but it doesn't often happen. Scolloping around the hillsides, ever higher and higher, the trail swings up and up. There's a glorious view all the way to the summit. This year there is no dust; the forest is damp; there is rich verdure where last year it was brown and dry. It makes the trip very pleasant now.

Finally we got through the woods far enough to leave the tantalizing ripple of Meadow creek out of earshot. By that sign I knew we were nearing the summit. Here we met Perkins of Sunrise City—the only one left of the hundreds who one time swarmed the gulch—who is yet washing gravel in the old place; he was going out to Quartz for a day. He asked a question or two, told me it was a hot day and informed me that the steepest part of the trail was ahead. I already knew that the day was warm and the information about the trail didn't make the weather seem any pleasanter. Mr. Perkins said everything was all right when I asked him about his work, but that was all.

We bade him good-bye and hiked ahead. By this time I had my second wind and the last steep climb didn't seem so bad. We hit the high places hard and soon we were at the summit; there was ample compensation there for all the effort of the hard climb. A fine breeze fanned us—we had been moving through a dead, sultry atmosphere for an hour—and the wind from the eternal snowbanks on Illinois peak and from the great drifts on the top of Sunrise mountain was refreshing. We fairly drank the fresh air.

And the view! For miles and miles before us rose and fell the peaks and canyons of the Bitter Root range. Magnificent in its beauty, the scene which spread before us was one never to be forgotten. I can close my eyes and see it even now. "I didn't think there were so many mountains in the world," was the comment of The Tenderfoot, as he reverently looked out over the impressive landscape. It was a wonderful panorama.

But Steve was waiting over in Windfall and we couldn't spare much time in the contemplation of landscapes; there were some more miles to be traversed and we went on. From this first summit, the trail has a delightful course down to Sunrise creek, which we forded right at the site of old Sunrise City. Here is where Perkins is still working, after forty years of washing in the gravel which made this camp one of the busy diggings of the old stampede days. His is the only cabin left of the long lines which once bordered the main street of the camp; the ruins of some of the others are visible if you look closely, but the grass and shrubbery have mantled most of the traces. It is a graveyard of forlorn hopes. But Perkins digs and washes, year after year, getting enough for his grubstake and contented enough with that. If he were to get more, he wouldn't know what to do with it.

The water in Sunrise creek is sweet and cold. It would be worth more than all the gold that was ever taken out of Sunrise, if it could be run into New York or Washington these hot days. It is the best cure for dry throat and excessive perspiration that I ever found. The location of Sunrise City is beautiful; the little opening is a veritable garden—all wild except the tiny enclosure, in which Perkins grows his lettuce and radishes. But it is a picture of beauty which no landscape gardener could excel. Perkins has a shower bath rigged under the spring above his house and I was tempted to try it but it was getting close to supper time and we didn't stay.

An easy climb, through more fragrant woods and past more banks of flowers, birds singing all about and God's golden sunshine flooding over all, brought us to the last summit on the slope of Sunrise—the top of the pass. We were 6,000 feet above the sea. Illinois peak was right ahead. Sunrise peak was just at our left. Clear to the western horizon extended the ragged line with breaks revealing the rich gulches between them and with deep shadows faintly indicating the wealth of timber which their sides bear.

Just a bit to the right and miles ahead, Hungry Hollow showed on the contour, indicating where the old trail breaks over into Cedar. Below that, Deep creek stretched, a scar on the green showing where hundreds of thousands of gold value has been washed out and where Dr. Eddy is now sluicing. Up at the left, a nearer scar in the hillside showed where Adam Thielen is washing in Ohio gulch and getting lots of money. At the far right the giant cedars of the Trout creek swamp rose from the basin. Straight down, at the foot of Landowner mountain, two miles away and 2,000 feet beneath us, were the Windfall diggings. That was the end of our trail.

For a long time we studied the scene. Below us there was gold everywhere; right at the north base of Landowner five of the richest gulches of the range mingle their sands; in each of these gulches there is yet plenty of activity and there is much dust being taken out. Millions have been taken from there and there are millions remaining. In the contemplation of this remarkable map of treasure-trove, we forgot for the time the scenic beauty which had claimed our attention as we breasted the summit and broke into the splendid breeze. Not in all the world is there a more interesting area crowded into closer limits than that which the traveler sees as he looks down the Sunrise trail.

There was snow in sight on many of the peaks ahead. Just off the trail where we stood, was the trace of the last drift on the Sunrise trail; the ground was yet damp from its moisture and the packer told us afterward that the last snow had disappeared but two days before we crossed. We were rested, cooled and refreshed; we had seen enough to keep us busy for a long time. Before us was the 2,000-foot drop in two miles, at the end of which was Windfall, where supper would be waiting. So we started on the down grade.

If there is anybody who thinks it is easier to walk down hill than it is to climb up, let him go down into Windfall. We hit the high spots and were going at a speed which exceeded the limit set by law when we swung around the last turn upon the comparatively level stretch that marked the last descent. At last we were in Windfall; we had climbed over in two hours and twenty minutes and had gained appetities that were tremendous. But there's a fine cook at Windfall—Grant is a Maine-woods Yankee and he had a small mountain of fried trout waiting for us. He said he liked the way we ate but I suspect he was glad when we left. We kept him working overtime for three days. Steve's welcome was cordial. The camp was comfortable. Everything was fine. And the Sunrise trail was behind us.

For three days we scouted those gulches. Of the trails we traveled there, I shall write something later. The Sunrise trail is enough for one story. We made some pleasant visits; we met some delightful men; everybody was kind to us. I have never crowded more enjoyment into any three days and that is why I am going to take another week to tell the rest of it—of Adam Thielen and Charlie Moorehouse in Ohio gulch, of Dr. Eddy in Deep, of Ives on lower Windfall, of the streams and the waterfalls, of the timber and the gold, of the trout and the scenery. It is hard to stop, but we have reached the end of the old Sunrise trail and that's a pretty good journey for one day. We went to sleep that night to the boom of the big reservoir as it discharged its flood upon the bedrock which Stevens is cleaning. There were frequent shots of dynamite during the night, but they didn't bother us. We had climbed the old trail and had enjoyed a mighty happy day.

July 22, 1911.

SUPPER ON SUNRISE

HE WHO starts out to follow the trails which the placer miners blazed forty years ago in the region around Trout creek and Cedar soon realizes that there were some strong travelers among the men who chased the will-o'-the-wisp, fortune, through these hills. It takes strong legs and good lungs to follow these trails at anything like the scheduled time which the men who tramped them first are said to have made. There is, of course, lacking in these later-day pilgrimages the incentive to quick walking which urged the early travelers to high speed, but if they traveled over the Bitter Roots from gulch to gulch at the rate they are reputed to have made, they wanted gold dust mighty bad. This was the conclusion which I reached after three days of tramping in the hills around Windfall.

Except in the wonderful cedar swamp on Trout creek, there is not a foot of level ground in this whole country. There is more scenery there to the mile than can be found anywhere else in this country. There is so much of this scenery that it had to be ended up to get it all in. It's hard to reach but it is wonderfully beautiful. It is not the movable, shifting scenery which used to bother Bert Palmer in the early days of the operation of the Coeur d'Alene branch and which has, since then, occasioned some difficulty in Milwaukee maintenance-of-way circles. It is firmly fixed. Any man will tell you that who has tried to wash any of it in order to get the gold that is hidden beneath it.

It is good, solid scenery. It bore my weight without bending and I stepped pretty heavily some of the time. It is impressively grand in places, delicately beautiful in others and always inspiring. Were it not for the charm of the region, tramping there, without the lure of gold to draw one on, would be mighty tiresome. But in the three days that I tramped around and rode with Steve and The Tenderfoot, I forgot all weariness in the delights of these grand hills, their wealth of beauty, their dense timber, their wonderful streams, their rugged gorges and their tumbling waterfalls. It was a glorious experience and I would like to repeat it.

I waked, next morning after the tramp over the Sunrise trail into Windfall, ready for anything, especially for breakfast. We spent some time in the inspection of the work that is being done in Windfall. Mr. Stevens has done a vast amount of development this year; he has moved gravel at a rate that has made oldtimers sit up and take notice. Incidentally, he has taken out a good bit of gold. He was beginning to clean up while we were there. But he has gone ahead systematically, preparing the gulch for the extensive operations which he has planned. The diggings are in fine shape for the next season's work. Three hundred feet or more of bedrock have been cleaned this year—and it was hard digging.

After we had looked over this ground, we journeyed up the trail on the South Fork to where Steve has built a sawmill. He has a great power there, enough to light a city were he to hitch it to a dynamo, and he has a wealth of fir timber that makes one pause in reverent admiration. Everywhere there are streams on this slope. And, also, everywhere there is down timber—just enough to block the trail when you think you've struck a good straightaway course. There is no dead timber here; the forest fires did not get over this ridge last year and the virgin forest is magnificent. It is a wonderful reserve for the operations which have been planned for Windfall. And it is up to the region's standard for scenery. It is hard to make time over a trail whose scenic charms compel such constant attention. And there are the creeks—their water is so clear and cold and sparkling that you have to stop for a drink every time you cross one.

For half a day we wandered about on these hills and, toward the middle of the afternoon, we struck on an obscure trail through the timber in Ohio gulch, where Adam Thielen and Charlie Moorehouse live and mine.

For thirteen years Adam has been mining in Ohio gulch. He has a rich bar and he works it slowly, in his own way. There's great money there and he knows it's there; each year he takes out what he needs and he makes no effort to get more; so long as his surplus is in the gravel, he knows where it is and he doesn't have to fret about it.

Adam's pit is several hundred feet long and it's fifty feet deep at the place where we found him when we rode up that hot afternoon. He was cleaning bedrock. He was close under the bank; the gravel is almost white and the sun was tremendously busy. Slowly he straightened up as we hailed him and he walked across to where we waited on the edge of the bank. His greeting was cordial. He shook my hand heartily and exclaimed: "Well, at last you got here. It's three years now you've been coming."

Then we went down into the pit with him. He washed out a pan for The Tenderfoot; there were some fine colors in it and he was pleased—so were we. But it was hot. Accustomed as he is to the place and the conditions. Adam showed that he felt it. Wiping his brow, he remarked:

"I tell you one thing. If it gets no cooler, Adam has got money enough this year."

That's the way to do placer mining. There's no rush as there was in the old days when the first trail was blazed into Ohio gulch. Adam was there in those days; he mined in all the gulches for a long time before he settled down in Ohio on his own ground. I don't believe he was as calm about it then as he is these days; but he has the right system now.

When he had panned the colors to show us the quality of his bedrock, he tossed the pan to one side and bade us follow him to the cabin. He had done enough work for one day and he wanted us to stay to supper with him and Charlie.

"Charlie's off locating some huckleberries," said Adam as we climbed up to the cabin. "But he'll be back pretty soon."

Twin cabins there are on the shoulder of Sunrise peak which shadows the rent which Adam has washed in Ohio gulch. Here dwell these two men—types of the race which made the west. It were possible to write pages upon their fine traits and their interesting peculiarities. It is Adam's ground and he works the mine. Charlie has retired from activity; he came to Ohio, after hard experiences, as Adam's guest. He is independent as to fortune and he pays his way, of course, but he would be happy and content in no other place.

Both these men were in these gulches when the diggings were new; each of them knows the whole country as well as I know the way down Higgins avenue; each has the history of the region always in mind. Neither of them would go elsewhere; each could go any time if he wanted to. Adam is a sturdy German; strong and clean and big—he's a fine type of the placer miner. He has not grown old—not at all.

It would take Remington properly to paint Moorehouse. In fact the fine old fellow is not unlike the veteran cavalryman who is in so many of the pictures of the famous painter. He is tall and sinewy; grizzled and grim. His story is one of the most interesting personal narratives I ever heard.

He was born in California in the days of the Argonauts. As a child he was left an orphan in Sacramento and he was reared by the miners—rough nurses, perhaps, but tender. When the rush to Idaho started, he was quite a boy and he came north with the miners' stampede—north into the Clearwater and St. Joe districts—led by the lure of gold. There they mined for a season or two in the summer, until driven out by the heavy snow that comes on the ocean side of the Bitter Roots. There they were when the rich bars of Cedar were found by Louis Barrette and his comrades.

In the next spring they heard of the new diggings on this side of the hills and over they came. And ever since then Montana has been the home of this life-long miner—Montana his home with the Bitter Root mountains as his habitation. In Cedar and on Trout, in Deep and on Quartz; in California gulch and in Oregon gulch—all through these trails he has tramped. And here he was when he learned, one early summer day, that war had been declared against Spain. At the same time he heard that Uncle Sam needed packers. He didn't wait. He just went as a packer.

And his service as government packer took him to the Philippines, where he led trains through the fever-infested passes of hills that were far different from his own. He got the fever. They did the best they could for him in the army hospitals, but that wasn't much and, seeing that he was homesick, they shipped him back to Frisco to die.

He didn't stop at Frisco. On the way across the Pacific, Moorehouse had been thinking about his own old mountains and he had made up his mind just how they looked at that time of year. He could see their streams and their cool shade; he knew their higher slopes were abloom with the plumes of the bear grass and he knew that the huckleberries were ripening.

As he thought about it, he became convinced that if he could get some of the huckleberries that grow in Windfall and Ohio gulches, he would get well. The Moorehouse mind is very positive; when it is made up, it stays right there. Consequently, not many days after that transport landed, Adam Thielen, going over the Sunrise trail to Quartz, found the wreck of Moorehouse there, looking pretty tough.

The story was told and Moorehouse asked Adam if he could go over and live in Adam's old cabin—Adam has moved his cabin six times; he calls it moving, but he means that he has built a new one six times, when the old ones have had the ground sluiced out from under them. He told Adam he could take care of himself; he had money enough for that, but he wanted to get up into Ohio gulch where he could get some huckleberries and get well. He was welcomed—not to the old cabin but to the new one—the newest one it was then; there has been one other built since. And he has stayed there since. Which is how these two veterans came to be partners in the cabin that looks away down over Ohio gulch.

Walking beside Adam I went up from the pit to the cabin. Absorbed in the interesting talk of the man, I did not realize until we reached the cabin door what a magnificent vantage point the home of these old miners occupies. When I turned to look back, the glorious scene burst upon me with all the suddenness of an unveiled picture. I have said before that the scenery of this region is incomparably impressive. It seemed, just then, as if I were looking upon a section of it which was grander and more beautiful than any of the rest. There is no use trying to describe it. I can't do it successfully. Silver threads of crystal water wound their way through the dark green of the foreground forest; eternal snows stretched their white expanse above; rugged cliffs broke, here and there, through the wall of verdure; for miles and miles the view extended, the great range broken at frequent intervals by deep gulches and grand canyons; overhead was the cloudless sky and a sweet breeze floated out of the balsam firs.

"There's gold in every one of those gulches," said Adam.

Pragmatic, that; but I noticed that care had been taken that none of the great plumes of bear-grass blossoms in the space about the cabin should be broken.

We talked for awhile, Adam conversing with the hungry eagerness of the man who seldom has the opportunity to talk with anybody from the outside. Then Moorehouse came in. I had never seen him before, but his greeting was cordial and he renewed the invitation extended by his partner that we stay for supper. The invitation accepted, Charlie busied himself with preparations for the meal, all the while carrying on a running comment that was as interesting as it was original.

"We have the last of the venison in the kettle—it was corned last winter—there will not be any more till fall—Adam was going fishing—we ought to have some trout, but he hasn't got his license yet—you can't do anything without a license now—the miner used to have this country for his own but he has no rights now—there's a forest ranger on every section corner—they have a camp over the hill where they practice target shooting—that's so they can kill the miners—'Our orders are not to be friendly with the miners,' is what one of them told me—and we found these hills before they were born—pretty soon we'll have to get a license to pick huckleberries—that's what Teddy Roosevelt did for this country—it's against the constitution but there is no constitution any more—I went over to Quartz creek on the Fourth to pay a visit and every man in the camp was working—what do you think of a camp where the men work on the Fourth—no wonder we have no rights—but we have some new potatoes if we haven't any trout—I couldn't get any at Quartz, so I sent to Frisco and had a hundred pounds sent by express—they're pretty good—and there's the venison and some ham—I don't know as you'll like this bread—it's miner's bread—I didn't find many huckleberries but there'll be a lot ripe soon—and there'll be lot of deer this fall—when the bear grass blossoms heavy the deer are always fat—and we'll have to get our licenses right away—these rangers will have to let us alone they have no right to interfere with us—they're a lot of boys—fight fire—you ought to see the way they do it—it shows what they know—"

And so it went on. All the while the old miner was peeling potatoes, frying ham, fixing bread and sauce and preparing a dinner that was fit for a king. Out of a closet Adam brought a long piece of summer sausage that he had got from George Nink months ago when he was in town. This was added to the bill of fare as a special treat and we sat down at a table where the hospitality was sincere and the good fellowship was cordial.

My seat at the table was where I could look out of the window that commanded the wonderful view which we had enjoyed as we came in. I suppose I became abstracted at times as I gazed out over Ohio gulch at the hills. Frequently I was reminded that I was not maintaining my reputation as a trencherman. But my hosts, I am sure, sympathized with my enjoyment of their panorama and in time I made good at the table.

It was a great meal; the viands were delicious; the table-talk was delightful; the surroundings were glorious. I don't think I shall ever forget that supper; it was a bit of Montana oldtimes served for my benefit.

I watched my hosts as they talked and as I ate. These old trails that I had been following were the trails which they had blazed and which had been for 40 years their daily by-ways. Those mountains which I had been enjoying were the open book of these men. Their love for the hills is strong; they have made their home at the head of the Ohio gulch trail, almost at the summit of the range. There they will probably camp until they take the last tramp on that other trail which crosses the Great Divide and which is traveled in only one direction.

As we turned our horses' heads toward Windfall and descended the old trail in the brilliant sunset light, winding through masses of flowers which would make an eastern city park famous, crossing the singing streams whose vesper music mingled with the good-night songs of the birds, breathing the inspiring atmosphere of the Bitter Root mountains, inhaling the fragrance of the balsam and the blossoms—I thought of the service which these men and their kind have rendered Montana and I sympathized with their view of the officious forest ranger. Moorehouse said they had had a man who was all right; he was a gentleman and he was on the square; he wished they had that same man now. And I wondered how any man could have so little tact and horse sense as to antagonize such splendid citizens as these old miners, simply because the letter of his law gave him the technical right to be obtrusive.

The descent of the trail was another delightful experience. Following the supper on Sunrise, it suggested many things. We stopped at a cabin clearing just at sunset to let the horses browse in the grass there. Above us a stream plunged 300 feet down the hillside, about us was the musical quiet of the hills, behind us was a delightful memory. We didn't talk much, each of us was thinking a good deal. More than ever it was borne in upon me that the real history of Montana is written in these old trails and I realized that I had just been privileged to read one of its most pleasing and instructive chapters. And so we went down to Windfall and to bed.

The night shift continued its bombardment of the boulders all that night—so they told me—but my sleep was undisturbed; the dynamite might have tipped over the cabin without disturbing me then; the tramp over the hills and the supper on Sunrise brought sound slumber—and no bad dreams.

There were two other days in Windfall. I had thought to tell of all of them in this little story but their incidents are too many and the travels and the people that filled those other days must go over for another Sunday morning. That supper on Sunrise was too much of an event to yield space to other experiences and that journey up Ohio gulch was too fine an experience to be condensed by other jaunts. So of Deep and Trout creeks, of the great cedar swamp and of the people down that way, I shall write another week.

I esteem the experience here set down as one of the most interesting I have ever enjoyed. I shall always remember my supper on Sunrise.

July 29, 1911.

TO THE TOP O' DEEP

"THERE are some trees that the moon can't get over," said Steve. "It has to pass around when it wants to get by."

It was mid-afternoon and we were in the heart of the great cedar swamp on Trout creek. Except here and there a little patch of sunshine on the ferns underfoot, it was almost dark in the great forest. The sun was blazing overhead, but we could see more of its brightness and we could feel none of its heat. All about us towered the giant cedars, reaching 200 feet or more into the mountain air. Their great shaggy butts stood about us like mammoth guards, whose ranks stretched away in every direction as far as we could see. The eerie light of twilight dusk was all around and there was no sound save the occasional call of a distant bird and the murmur of Trout creek as it ran through the swamp and even the stream moved more quietly than it had in the gulch above. It was an impressive scene. The Tenderfoot and I took off our hats. He said it made him feel like being in church and that was the very thought that had occurred to me. We sat there on our horses, silent and reverent, the summer breeeze through the tops of the cedars emphasizing the impression with its suggestion of a pipe-organ.

It was our third day in the Windfall country. Ever since early morning we had been on the move. We had got on our mountain legs and we moved with some speed at last. All day we had been following old trails and I think we struck, that day, the worst trail and the hardest to travel, there is in all the world. If there is a tougher trail than the one down Trout creek, I don't want to travel it. When we had traversed a part of it I understood why it is easier to get into Windfall from the back way, over Sunrise, than it is to go straight up the stream.

There is a Missoula man who ~~has solved~~ the mystery of the Trout creek trail. He says that the first man who went down the stream thought he had lost his way and climbed to the summit to get his bearings. He went back down and traveled a hundred yards when he got lost again. He repeated his previous performance and the act became continuous until he had reached the mouth of the gulch. The theory seems reasonable when you have traveled over the trail; it alternates between the top of the hill and the creek level all the way down. Every man who has journeyed down the gulch, since that first traveler made the trip, has followed the original tracks and the practice continues. The Trout creek trail makes the Sunrise route seem like a boulevard.

But the cedar forest in the big swamp is a sight which more than compensates for the difficulties of a trip up Trout. If you cannot reach it any other way, it is worth the endeavor. But the pleasantest way is to go as we did; travel down Windfall, around Landowner mountain, and cross Trout creek on the old bridge which the miners built, back in the sixties, and a turn to the right lands you in the midst of the giant cedars. It's a pleasant jaunt that way, there's no trouble in the trip and the journey's end is delightful.

About that cedar forest centers one of the most interesting regions of the Bitter Root mountains. For two days we had been looking down upon it from the hills above. Since we breasted the crest of the Sunrise trail, we had been gazing into this remarkable basin. We had looked at it from the slope of Sunrise, we had seen it from the head of Ohio gulch, we had studied it through field glasses from Windfall. Now we stood in its very center.

Breakfast had been early in the Windfall camp that morning—early for us, that is, and the grass and shrubbery were heavy with dew as we started down the trail for Trout creek and the Top o'Deep. It was fine, that morning ride. The air was intoxicating, even the old white mare, which the Tenderfoot bestrode, felt its influence and frisked a bit. Ripening huckleberries and big, red raspberries hung over the trail, and the fragrance of blossoms was heavy in the air. It is no wonder the mountain men get up early; the night always leaves a different tang to the air from the taint which clings to the town atmosphere after darkness has passed. It isn't necessary to wait till the sun has sterilized the air.

Windfall is a beautiful gulch, whichever way you travel within its walls. Its course seemed specially attractive that morning; two days had not staled the charm for us and we reveled in that ride. We paused for a moment to look at the Ives diggings, below the old Miller workings, and then rode on, down and ever down, toward the crossing of Trout. We were following the oldest trail in the district, the historic path which led out of Cedar, and there, around the end of Landowner, we could see Hungry hollow and the Top o'Deep, where the way led over into Cedar. Thousands had traveled that way—thousands of elated, happy miners, treasure-trove, and thousands more of hopeful fellows, certain that their rainbows struck the earth just ahead and that their hidden treasure lay in the gulch just beyond. Over this trail had journeyed the pack-trains, laden with the supplies which kept the placer camps alive—bacon and flour, tobacco and whisky, shirts and shoes. Out over this trail had been carried the treasure of the successful Argonauts and over this route had plodded the disappointed seekers after the dust. These hills had echoed to shouts of exultation and they had thrown back the wail of the despairing. In its time it had been a busy artery of commerce. But it isn't traveled so much now.

A turn to the left and we were in the midst of a growth of vegetation which was fairly tropical in its luxuriance. Great ferns were all about us, blossoming shrubs hung over our heads, making the trail a bower. The beauty of the place banished retrospect and commanded consideration of the present. Springs bubbled up on each side. Birds were singing everywhere. The trees and the undergrowth shut out all sight of the hills. For the moment we were transplanted into a new region; this was different from anything we had seen.

This bridge sent back our thoughts to the days when the crossing was built, the days of the supreme activity of these gulches and these hills. Here was the center of that activity. Just ahead, about 300 yards, was Deep creek, along which the tide of fortune-seekers had overflowed from Cedar when the great stampede set in. Behind us lay Windfall and Ohio and Sunrise; at our right was the big swamp; at our left was Trout. Landowner mountain towered above us. If the theories of the geologists are correct there are millions in the ground upon which we stood. Millions in dust are there, waiting the operator with nerve and capital enough to get them out. Above, in all directions, are rich bars and all lead that way. Why should there not be millions there?

We turned up Trout creek and rode through more of the maze. Up a sharp slope, over a point of rocks, down a winding path, and we were at the mouth of Deep. Deep creek has been the scene of activity in placer mining for a good many years. The tailings are spread clear across the lower end of the gulch and the old trail there is obliterated. But the way is plain. From the vast bed of tailings it is a straight view up to the historic Top o'Deep, where the old path leads over from Cedar. We picked our way over the tailings and climbed the other bank of Deep, fording the stream, dwindled to small volume so late in the season, and we were in the comfortable camp of Dr. Eddy of Michigan, whose summers are spent here in the pleasant work of extending the scar in the gulch and gathering the gold which is left behind. Dr. Eddy and his partner, O. A. Klingensmith, also of Michigan, were cordial in their welcome.

We dismounted, turned out the horses and prepared for the tramp up Trout creek, another one of the arteries which give life to this wonderful basin in the heart of the Bitter Root mountains. Dr. Eddy made us promise to get back to camp in time for dinner. He had no need to exact that pledge from me, for the jaunts through the hills had given me an unerring instinct as to the time and the place of meals. No homing pigeon was ever more accurate in placing his location than was I when it came time to eat. But it was different with the Tenderfoot. Of which, this narrative will furnish developments.

Steve was going to fish and the Tenderfoot had a yearning to catch a mountain trout. I have not much inclination that way and when I looked over the rapids, the riffles and the eddies in Trout creek that morning and saw swarms of salmon flies hovering above the water, undisturbed, I concluded the trout had had their breakfast and wouldn't be hungry for artificial flies. The sequel proved the correctness of my theory. While I tramped up the creek, Steve caught three trout and the Tenderfoot landed one. But each of them had a good time. So did I.

The trail up Trout creek from the mouth of Deep, leads along the old flumes which furnished water for the earlier operations on Deep. Dr. Eddy has washed so far back up the creek that the flume will no longer reach and he depends solely upon the flow of Deep. It's a big flume and, one of these days, when the right man comes along with a plan for getting the gold out of the great bar of the swamp, it will generate a lot of electric power for him. I tramped up the trail away above the flume. The gulch of Trout creek is narrow up there and its steep walls shut out the rest of the world completely.

It was easy to imagine the eagerness with which the prospectors of days past traveled up this stream; every one of its turns promises gold and every one of them has been examined a good many times. Some of them made good and some of them were as faithless as the campaign pledges of a politician. There is a lot of wealth credited to Trout creek and there is more in the bars of the stream which will yield one of these days to modern methods. Far up the stream there are promising diggings in which Harry Shapard of Missoula and others are interested. The lure is there and, it seems certain that the gold is there, too, or was it that the spell of the place had seized upon me and I had become infected with the fever which led those old-day miners to give their lives to the quest for the yellow dust in these hills? Perhaps that was it. Anyway, I found myself longing for a pan and a shovel as I tramped along.

But the spell was not so strong upon me that I did not heed the signal of the approach of noon. My mountain-given instinct told me that it was time to turn. And I turned. I was more strongly impelled to get something to eat than I was to hunt for gold. Back down the trail to Deep I trudged. There was much I had overlooked on the way up—these trails always present something new. The back trail was as delightful as had been the tramp up the stream. Just above Deep creek, I encountered Steve and his three trout. Together we went back to Dr. Eddy's camp.

Dinner was there, but the Tenderfoot was not. We felt sure he was all right, so we ate. Dinner was ended and the Tenderfoot had not appeared. Two of the men at the diggings said they had seen him cross the tailings at the mouth of the creek, so we knew he was chasing fish with all his stubborn Yankee persistency. We filled our pipes and waited. But no Tenderfoot. Then I went down the stream a ways and signaled. No response. We were not worried except for the appetite of the Tenderfoot, so we waited.

At length he appeared. He had fished all the way down Trout creek to the old bridge before he had realized where he was. So intent had he been upon his angling that he had passed the camp without noticing his bearings. Not until he struck the bridge had he located himself. But he had caught one trout and was happy and hungry. I went with him to the cookhouse to keep him company, chaffing him about getting so wet, while I had kept dry.

Pride went before a fall with me. The bench at the end of the table in the Deep creek cookhouse has an extension end. I sat upon this end, opposite the Tenderfoot, just to be sociable—I had no yearning for food; my appetite had gone. As I sat down, the bench naturally tipped up, for my 200 pounds were too much for its extension. There was a big bucket of drinking water at the end of the bench for convenience and I didn't fall to the floor—I went right into that bucket. The cook and the Tenderfoot were much amused and I had nothing to say about anybody's getting wet.

When the Tenderfoot's appetite had been satisfied, we went up to the diggings with Dr. Eddy. He has done a vast amount of work on Deep and his men were cleaning bedrock when we visited the place. The returns were good; we saw a lot of gold, much of it big nuggets. It was good to see. It made clear the incentive there is to the continued battle against the bars of this region to force them to yield their treasure. Just to hold that yellow stuff is to want to dig out more of it. It is not the lust for wealth as much as it is the satisfaction of having compelled the bars to give up. It is the sense of having conquered.

Above Dr. Eddy's diggings is the Top o'Deep. There was a strong temptation to go on over the old trail into Cedar. I looked longingly at the old path up the hill. But Billy Murphy, who was a kid in the days of the old stampede and who handled a pack train over this old trail, had promised me that, before winter, he would go into Cedar with me. He knows every foot of that country and I want to follow that old trail in his company. So I turned back and left Hungry hollow for another day. But I promise myself lot of enjoyment when Billy and I go into Cedar.

It was on the way back from Deep that we made the detour into the great cedar swamp on Trout creek. We recrossed the old bridge and went down stream. In a few steps we were in the midst of a skeleton forest.

For perhaps half a mile the tailings from upstream have killed the cedar monarchs and their lifeless, whitening limbs reach out from their ghost-like bodies, stretching like demon arms over the head of the traveler. It is positively uncanny. A new growth has started upon the tailings dump; it reaches 20 or 30 feet into the air, but above it tower these gaunt and lifeless forest kings, shorn of their glory in the battle for gold. The scene was like one of Dore's illustrations of Dante's "Inferno"; it sent the chills up and down my back.

A few minutes of this was enough and I was glad when we got through the dead timber. Soon the trail led into the living cedars and weirdness yielded to wonderful beauty and grandeur. It did not seem possible that we were in Montana. It was like a strange land. Impressively grand are these giants; solemn they are and majestic; beautiful with a beauty that possesses dignity and repose. Older than man are these giants; they have seen the earth grow old and have witnessed the making of history. They have smiled at the puny efforts of man and they look down upon the marks of his endeavor with proud defiance. Yet one day these cedars will fall before the arm of man when he essays to find the gold which lies at their feet, the gold which has, ages gone, washed down from the five rich gulches above, the gold which the geologist says is there, the gold which has tempted the expenditure of fortunes. But this gold will some day be taken and these cedars, felled and cut into blocks, will furnish some of the capital which will bring their own undoing. It seems a sacrilege to talk of destroying this wonderful forest, but its destruction is an essential part of the plan which is being formed to wrest the millions from the Trout creek swamp. Then there will be a new trail into Trout creek. But it will never possess the interest which attaches to the old one we followed on this memorable day.

The sun was hanging low over Landowner's summit when we emerged from the cedar forest and turned for our last climb toward the Windfall camp. It beat hot against the east wall of the canyon, along which the trail runs. On the other side of the gulch, the shades of evening were already descending. We moved toward home in the sunset glow.

For a few moments we halted at the Ives diggings, long enough to see him wash out a couple of fine nuggets along with the dust of his cleanup. Then we swung up on the high trail, through the huckleberries again and above the diggings, where Ed Miller had spent the summers of his later life and where he had wrested fortune against heavy odds. Below us roared the discharge of Steve's big reservoir as it swept away the debris from the Windfall diggings. Yellow and turbid poured the flood. Was it leaving behind the grains of gold for which all this work is being done?

The flood passed. We breasted the high hill that commands the whole canyon. Below us, but up the stream, the boom of dynamite told that the miners were preparing for another reservoir head.

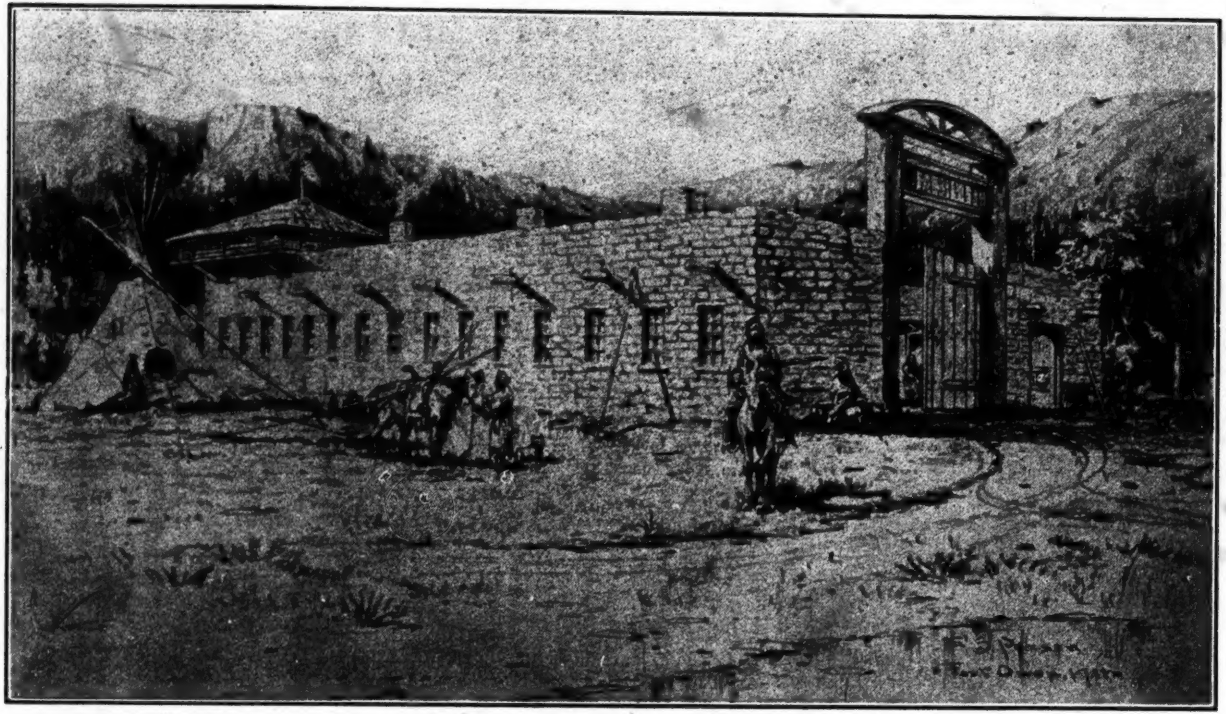
That was our last jaunt in the Windfall country. The next morning we climbed back out, over Sunrise. We had tramped and ridden over some of the most interesting trails in Montana. They had told us the story of the making of a new country, told it more clearly than pages of books could set it forth. We left the basin with genuine regret.

Aug. 5, 1911.

FOUR FAMOUS FORTS

ONLY once in the history of the Bitter Root country has there been an incident out of tune with the peaceful tone of the delightful region; only once has the jarring note of war disturbed the harmony of its development. From the very first, the Indians, whose ancestral home was in this valley, were the friends of the white man; it was, in fact, their solicitation which brought the Jesuit missionaries into this region; so eager were they to receive the message which the Gospel teaches that they sacrificed the lives of some of their best young men in order to get the request through the hostile country of their hereditary foes—the Sioux and the Blackfeet—into the hands of the Black Robes in St. Louis. Peace has been the keynote of the history of the Bitter Root. Gentle and brave were its early inhabitants; the friendliness of the Indians was not the servile friendliness of fear—the Flatheads had often demonstrated their prowess in war with the Indians of the eastern valleys. Theirs was the peacefulness of courage; they were at heart fond of quiet, but they proved worthy foes of the belligerent Blackfeet, their quarrelsome eastern neighbors.

Hardly had the echoes of the fearful conflict on the Little Big Horn died out, hardly had the people of western Montana ceased to shudder over the horrible details of the massacre of Custer and his command, when word came from the west side of the Bitter Root mountains that the Nez Perces were on the warpath and that settlers had been murdered in cold blood. The Nez Perces were kinsmen of the Bitter Root Indians; the relations between the tribes had always been friendly and there was fear that the Indians across the range might enlist the braves of Charlot's tribe as allies. It was in July, 1877, just a year after the Custer battle, that the first word of the Nez Perce uprising came over the mountains to strike terror to the hearts of the settlers on the Montana side of the divide. At first the rumors were vague: then they became more definite and, finally, the news of the revolt of Joseph's people came up the St. Joe and over into Cedar creek, from which place it was taken to the Missoula valley, to Deer Lodge and to Silver Bow by Billy



Old Fort Owen

—Drawn by E. S. Paxson.

Murphy, who made one of the most notable rides in Montana's history to bring the news.

The incidents which followed found their climax in the march of Joseph through the Bitter Root, over the Lewis and Clark trail into the Big Hole, and his encounter with Gibbon's command on the bluffs that overlook Trail creek. This week has been the anniversary of these stirring events; they have been much talked about in western Montana as the dates have been checked off the calendar since last Sunday. The history of the days of alarm in 1877 has been recounted in the words of some of the participants; some new incidents have been recalled in this connection and some others have been graphically retold. The reiteration has been interesting to the newer residents of western Montana and has refreshed the memories of the older ones. It has recalled the one warlike chapter in the Bitter Root's history and has pointed attention once more to four famous forts which had place in the valley and which were, it developed, entirely unnecessary; they were—three of them—built as places of refuge for the settlers when it was known that Joseph was coming through the Bitter Root valley. Fort Fizzle, Fort Skeedaddle and Fort Skalkaho were deprived of usefulness in the Nez Perce invasion, by the intervention of Charlot in behalf of the whites. Fort Owen, the fourth of the citadels, was historic in the part it had already played in the development of the valley; it was a permanent establishment; some of its adobe buildings yet stand in the beautiful valley near Stevensville.

As a fitting jaunt on this anniversary week, I have been traveling over a part of Joseph's trail through the Bitter Root. I have seen again the sites of the four forts which figure in the history of the only military invasion of the valley. About twenty years ago when I made this trip the first time, there were yet standing traces of the walls of these hastily constructed forts, the sod walls for Fort Skeedaddle were one of the sights of the valley for a long time. Fort Fizzle was not much of a fortress; it was an earthwork and timber breastwork combined; there are yet in Missoula some men who served behind it during the bloodless encounter in Lolo canyon, when Joseph told the military he never turned back, then made good his assertion, doing it without firing a shot or disturbing the peace of the slumbers of the men entrenched within Fizzle. Fort Skalkaho was no more necessary than its contemporaries; by the time Joseph was that far along on his march, it became recognized that he didn't intend to molest the Bitter Root country.

When the news of Joseph's war got across the Bitter Root range, there was a good deal of speculation as to the route he would follow. Volunteer companies were organized in the border towns; Missoula had one; Stevensville had one; Deer Lodge mustered another; Silver Bow turned out some of her best men; Virginia City stood ready to do her best in the repulsion of the invader. Then it became known that Joseph was coming over through Lolo pass and it was concluded at once that he would turn down the river and march upon Missoula as soon as he struck the Bitter Root. Fort Missoula was then in course of erection; its little garrison and the Missoula volunteers marched to Lolo pass to head off Joseph and his warriors. Hence, Fort Fizzle.

Fort Fizzle—not so named by the men who threw up the earthworks and there awaited the advance of the red-skinned general. Fort Fizzle—so called by reason of the conclusion of the battle which waged there—a battle of words and a flank movement by the wily chief which left the whites in their fort, watching an empty canyon, while the Nez Perces marched on down the pass and into the Bitter Root country. Fort Fizzle—well named, indeed.

It was afternoon, hot and dusty, when Joseph's braves marched down the Lolo trail toward the fort which was to turn them back. There was a parley between Joseph and the commandant of the Fort Missoula garrison, then intrenched in Fort Fizzle, which resulted in this ultimatum, delivered by Joseph to the interpreter: "Tell him I never turn back; tell him I shall not turn back now."

And each side went into bivouac, resting on its arms. The Missoula volunteers have told me that John Barleycorn took a prominent part in the council of war which was held in Fort Fizzle that night. Perhaps that is why nobody heard Joseph break camp and march around on the side of the hill. Whatever the reason, it is certain that nobody heard him, and when daylight came the soldiery was amazed to discover that there was nothing but the smoldering Indian campfires left burning to deceive the watchers, while the braves and the squaws and all their equipment moved around the defenders of Missoula.

Then there was mounting in hot haste and running to and fro. Perhaps Joseph even then was moving across the flat to pillage and burn Missoula; it was even possible that the massacre of the town's inhabitants might already have been accomplished.

Fort Fizzle was above where the Hollensteiner ranch now presents a picture of plenty to the visitor; there is nothing there to indicate the bloodless battle which Joseph, consummate general, won over his white foes that August night, years ago. The mad dash of the white defenders of Missoula was down the canyon to the mouth of Lolo creek. There they made the gratifying discovery that Joseph had turned up the river and Missoula was safe. Perhaps it was their display of force that influenced Joseph to spare Missoula and perhaps Joseph had never had any designs against the town. He never told anybody, but the christening of Fort Fizzle indicated the conclusion which was reached by the people of the town which was saved.

Fort Skeedaddle stood right alongside what is now the county road about three miles this side of Corvallis. When I first saw it, its walls had not crumbled to any extent, though it had been built about fifteen years. It did not figure in the events of the march of the Nez Perces and it figures in the history of that stirring incident only as an interesting memory. Fort Skalkaho was built near the stream from which it took its name and, this too, was only a monument of what might have happened had it not been that Father Ravalli and his influence averted the terrible possibility of a march of plunder and pillage and made the passing of Joseph through the valley merely the movement of a band of Indians going somewhere.

Fort Owen, the fourth of the famous citadels of the Bitter Root, has an interesting and enduring history. It yet remains, in part, as it was builded in the early days of the valley. It was to have been the refuge of the people about Stevensville had the march of Joseph been warlike, but it was not built for that purpose. It was never a military fort; it was a trading post, erected by Major Owen when he purchased the improvements made by the Jesuit missionaries at the original St. Mary's. Troublesome traders and trappers, jealous of the influence of missionaries over the Indians, had succeeded in poisoning the minds of the latter against the priests to such an extent that the position of the missionaries had become unsafe and they were ordered to abandon the mission for a time. Their improvements were sold to Major Owen and the priests retired to the Coeur d'Alenes. Thus Fort Owen became the commercial center of the Bitter Root country. This was in 1850. Years later St. Mary's mission was re-established, but at another site. Fort Owen later passed into the possession of Major McCormick and it is yet the property of his heirs. It was here that Major McCormick was killed by the unroofing of a building during a gale of wind. Of the old structures, two adobe sheds are now standing; they mark the site of the first white settlement in Montana, of the first civilizing influence which entered this region, of the first permanent occupancy of this valley by the race which has conquered the west.

There is much of absorbing interest in a trip over the trail which Joseph followed through the Bitter Root, though but one of the landmarks remains. The contemplation of the crumbling walls of Fort Owen suggests the splendid development which has taken place in the years which have ensued. The complete obliteration of the other forts is significant of the completeness of the triumph of the new order of things. The old order changeth.

Looking southward from the crumbling ruins of Fort Owen, one sees embowered in the shade of the cottonwoods which surround it, St. Mary's mission church, erected by the revered Father Ravalli when the mission was re-established, the church built by his hands, the trees planted by him. Above to the westward, towers the magnificent peak of "dear old St. Mary's," as Father Ravalli called the grand mountain. The splendid peak, the modest spire of the little log church and the simple marble shaft which marks the last resting place of this wonderful man—all these tell of the influence which averted bloodshed when Joseph made his trail through the Bitter Root. But for this man and his influence, the history of these four forts of the Bitter Root would have been a very different story, and the memory of the forts themselves would not be evanescent—it would be indelibly stamped in blood upon the pages of western Montana's history. The enduring impression of the jaunt over this old trail is the realization of the great debt which western Montana owes to this great man. The week whose anniversary has just passed was a critical point in the history of the Bitter Root. Let us not forget that the one man who, more than all others, made it possible to write this peaceful story of the four forts, was Father Ravalli.

August 12. 1911.

A FAMOUS PASS

THERE is a good deal of climbing involved in crossing the Gibbon pass that leads from the east fork of the Bitter Root river into the Big Hole basin. Foot for foot, there is more ascent to this trail than to almost any other that I know about. Also, there is more history connected with every foot of this mountain path than with any other with which I am familiar. It is one of the most remarkable trails in Montana.

Over this trail came Lewis and Clark on their way to the Pacific coast. In Ross' Hole, at the Bitter Root end of the trail, the explorers met the Indians whom they named "Flatheads," though the name was improperly given. Over this trail marched the Indians to meet Father DeSmet on his way to answer the call of these people and their appeal for knowledge of the new religion. Over this trail came Judge Frank H. Woody, who is now the oldest white resident in Montana, when he made his entrance into the state. Over this trail marched Chief Joseph on his famous expedition. Over this trail passed Gibbon in hot pursuit of the Indian leader.

Is that not a list of events sufficient to substantiate my statement that this is one of the most important of the old trails of Montana? Deeds of peace and deeds of war have been enacted along this pathway. Over its abrupt course have marched the explorer, the priest, the warrior and the pioneer. Its path has been beaten hard by the impact of moccasined feet, by the tread of military boots, by the shuffle of patient oxen and by the tramp of iron-shod steeds. Its walls of living pines, tall and stately, have echoed to the prayer of the missionary, to the profanity of the bullwhacker, to the gutterals of the red man, to the command of the soldier and to the labored breathing of them all. For the man does not live who can climb Gibbon pass and maintain his normal respiration.

More than ten years ago I climbed this trail for the first time. Upon that occasion I had the pleasure of the company of Judge Woody, who had not been over that hill since he crossed it the first time, when he came into Montana in 1856. The judge's companionship added amazingly to my enjoyment of that trip. He made some very mean comments upon my knee action, I remember, as I pegged along up the hill, but the sting of these is lost in the memories of his pleasant remarks upon other topics connected with the trip. The judge had little difficulty in locating the route by which he had descended the hill when he first came to the Bitter Root; the pass is a permanent bit of scenery and does not change much, even in half a century. Judge Woody was even able to point out the sidehill, where he had incurred the wrath of the wagon-boss by upsetting his outfit in the descent.

Nor has the Gibbon pass changed much since I saw it the first time. There has been a good deal of improvement about its base; the valley of the east fork and the little basin of its south branch have been settled considerably; the cabins of a decade ago have yielded place to substantial homes; the grainfields are crowding out the old meadow grass; the orchards are forcing away the pines. But neither civilization nor cultivation has reduced the angle of the slope of the Gibbon pass. It is certainly just as steep as it was in 1805 when the first whites tramped over it—perhaps it is a little steeper.

There is none of the pleasant and restful effect of intermittent level stretches on this trail, which is found on most of the mountain passes of the Bitter Roots. It is, every foot of it, up one way and down the other way. The only satisfaction which attends the physical effort of climbing this pass is the exhilaration which comes from the consciousness that you are getting somewhere. There is no lost motion in this climb—all the way and every foot of the way, you're going up. There is absolutely no compromise about this trail; it sets out to get over the mountains and it wastes no time or distance in going around or in temporizing. It goes directly at the business in hand. When, after two hours—if you're right quick—of hard climbing, you get to the summit, there is not any doubt in your mind that you have been climbing. You know it for a fact.

The pines crowd low on the Bitter Root side of the pass. Leaving the beautiful basin which we call Ross' Hole, but which is worthy of a more fitting name, the road turns up the south fork. Along this stretch there is evidence of the rapid settlement of the upper Bitter Root; there are many delightful ranch homes here now; they are productive and they are permanent. It was at the Waugh ranch that Judge Woody and I stopped on that trip, a decade ago, to spend the night before making the climb over the pass. It is a beautiful place and the judge in a very few minutes caught enough trout for our supper. We did some tall sleeping that night and were ready for breakfast in the morning. Likewise, we were in good mood for the climb.

Up through the pines, from the ranch—past the Gallogly hot springs—the trail strikes straight along the stream for the base of the mountain. Even to its very foot, this mountain is uncompromising. It leaves the valley with all the abruptness of a man refusing to sign a subscription list. And all the way up it maintains its unyielding determination to get to the top with as little deviation from the straight and unswerving course, as possible. I can testify that the trail is wonderfully successful in the accomplishment of its purpose. It gets to the top and it gets there without circumvention.

But there is, after all, nothing which is worth having which comes easily. The summit of the Gibbon pass is glorious in itself; it is worth the climb to attain that eminence. On either side are higher altitudes; the pass is a saddle in the divide's profile. And they are glorious peaks; to behold them once is never to forget them. And, away in the distance, rise the summits of the main range. They are snowclad ever but they are inspiring. It was within the splendid amphitheater of these hills that Father DeSmet in 1840 had his first meeting with the Indians, among whom he was later to labor to such great advantage. It was over this pass that they journeyed to meet him.

Two thousand there were of them—Flatheads, Kootenais, Nez Perces and Kalispells—who had been advised of the coming of the Black Robe and who had crossed the pass to meet him and to greet him. It was in sight of these inspiring pinnacles, that he held his first conference with the sons of the mountains. As a result of this meeting there were many of them baptized, and the priest agreed to return the following year and locate permanently among the people who welcomed him so cordially and who were so hungry for The Message which he brought.

Thrilled by his experience, burning with the enthusiasm of the zealot, inspired by the nearness of God which these mountains always brings and filled with hope and with the confidence which the hills beget—Father DeSmet climbed one of these peaks and looked over the valleys which he was to conquer for his Master. But it was the mountains which held his eye and enthralled his heart and he wrote these linees, which have been preserved in the record of his journeyings:

"Ye Rockies, hail! Majestic mounts!
Of future bliss the favored shrine!
For you God's heart, of gifts divine,
Opens this day its precious founts."

Standing upon this summit, looking back over the tops of the pines through which the ascent has been made and gazing forward at the wonderfully beautiful panorama which spreads before us, it is easy to comprehend the ecstatic state of mind in which the young priest found himself. And it is easy, too, to understand why it was that the Indians of this region were always gentle and brave, mild and courageous. It was the influence of their environment.

The glaring sun of the eastern prairies and the sweep of their terrible winds gave the red-eyed ferocity to the Sioux. The blazing heat and the dust-laden storms of the southern deserts bred in the Apache the brutality and ferocity which were his characteristic traits. The inspiration of the mountains, the softness of their atmosphere, the fragrance of their forests, the splendor of their valleys—these had made of the Indians of western Montana a gentler race, not prone to war but brave and fearless in the defense of their rights.

These were the people who first trod the trail over the Gibbon pass. It was their path which Lewis and Clark followed when, in September, 1805, they left the headwaters of the Big Hole river and its wonderful basin and climbed into the Bitter Root country. The Big Hole side of the pass is not as strenuous as the Bitter Root slope; it is more gradual and it leaves the forest for the meadows earlier in its descent. But these meadows of the Big Hole, along Trail creek, are more than a thousand feet higher than the fields of the Bitter Root across the range.

Nowhere else in the world, I believe, is there such grass as that which grows along the Big Hole side of the Gibbon pass after it leaves the timber. The trail, hard-traveled though it is, becomes almost lost in the tall native grass that grows in it and about it. In places this grass reaches to the heads of the horses. It is not the coarse, inedible forage which grows rank in so many places—it is beef-making, nourishing, succulent grass and it is marvelous in its luxuriance. Steep-banked creeks flow through this wealth of forage, dismaying the traveler as he comes unexpectedly upon them, hidden in the tall grass. It is a paradise for cattle during its brief summer seaason. There are many sheep and cattle grazed here during the open months. It is a clean, healthful region, but blankets are needed all the time, for there are heavy frosts at night, even in August.

The first whites to enter the Bitter Root country were the men of the Lewis and Clark expedition; they came over the Big Hole basin and the Gibbon pass in September, 1805. In Ross' Hole at the head of the Bitter Root, they came upon the Indians encamped there on a hunting expedition. The meeting was friendly and I have talked with one or two old Indians who remembered the advent of the whites. One of these, an old Indian woman named Eugenie, was living at St. Ignatius while Major Ronan was Indian agent, and I have heard her tell of the amazement of her people when they saw the whites.

In 1743, a French priest, Sieur de LaVarendrye, had penetrated the Missouri river country and had there met a party of the Bitter Root Indians on a buffalo hunt; the seeing of these white men was a legend of the tribe, but the meeting of the people with Lewis and Clark in 1805 was the first contact with the new race.

Eugenie was a girl of 14 when she saw the white men first. Her description of the event tallies with the story told in the record of the expedition. The Indians were delighted; they greeted the "white gods" with all the awe of their simple natures and offered gracious hospitality to these strange visitors. They furnished willing escort to the travelers and the journey through the Bitter Root was like a triumphant march. The negro servant of the explorers was the source of amazement; the Indians could not understand whether he was of a higher race or a lower than the whites; those who dared, touched his black skin with their fingers. There was formal feasting, a council and a solemn assurance of the friendliness of the red people.

Lewis and Clark, it is believed, thought that they had reached the Pacific coast when they mounted the crest of the Gibbon pass. They had heard of the Flathead Indians of the coast whose name comes from the malforming of the skulls of the children, and they assumed that the Indians they met in Ross' Hole were of this tribe, though there could certainly have been nothing in their appearance to warrant the conclusion. But in no other way can the accident be explained which fastened upon this people the name which they have since borne to the exclusion of their proper appellation, Selish.

Next in order in the list of events which have given fame to the Gibbon pass was the expedition of the Indians to meet Father DeSmet. So eager were they to hear the gospel from the lips of one of its ordained teachers that they journeyed far to meet the messenger of peace, the Black Robe for whom they had sent. How they found him and how they secured his promise to come and live among them have been told. It was the forerunning event of an important chapter in the history of Montana, the raising of the cross in this valley.

It was in October, 1856, that Judge Frank H. Woody, driving an ox team, came over this trail. The judge had started from Salt Lake and the outfit was headed for the Hell Gate river. Judge Woody crossed the Gibbon pass into the Bitter Root with the bull teams and this has been his home ever since; in point of residence, he is the oldest white Montanan. The trail was no better then than it is now, and is evidenced by the judge's story of his first crossing of the pass.

"We crossed Big Hole prairie," he says, "and came up Trail creek to the summit of the divide, which we crossed at what is now called Gibbon pass, and came down into Ross' Hole. The road across the mountains at Gibbon pass was the most difficult which we traversed on the entire journey. From the summit of the mountain down to the valley of Ross' Hole was some two miles, with no road except an Indian trail, through the timber, and much of the way the descent was very steep and in many places quite abrupt. In order to get our wagons down, it was necessary to lock both the rear wheels and put rough locks on them by wrapping chains around them and also by hitching two yoke of cattle to the rear end of each wagon with a man at their heads with a club, to make them pull back. Even then they came down the mountain at railroad speed. These were the second lot of wagons over the trail. In the fall of 1855, two or three wagons, lightly loaded, were brought over this trail, piloted by an old Mexican trapper, named Emanuel Martin, generally known and called by the name 'Old Manwell, the Spaniard.' "

That was the entrance of the veteran of all the western Montana veterans. The trail has been cleared of fallen timber and stumps since he first traversed it, but there is yet the steep incline. Time has not modified that in the least.

On my desk as I write, there is a relic which recalls another historic crossing of the old trail—the crossing which gave to it the name it now bears. This relic is one of the four shells which were fired from the mountain howitzer which General Gibbon's men dragged over the hill and which was used in the battle of the Big Hole. I believe it was Joe Blodgett who was the gunner; the howitzer was a hard proposition on the trail and was late getting into action. Four times it was fired before Joseph's Indians got behind it and drove away its crew. This one shell did not explode; it was picked up, years afterward, in the mud along Trail creek and was given to me by Arthur Holt of Grantsdale.

The pursuit of Joseph by General Gibbon and Captain Catlin with their commands was probably the most dramatic crossing of this old trail. At the south end of the trail was fought one of the most sanguinary combats in the history of Indian warfare. Trail creek ran blood on the morning of August 9, and the waters of Ruby creek verified their name. Good lives were sacrificed there because a stubborn commander would not heed the advice of veteran frontiersmen. But the spirit of the rebellious Nez Perces was broken, their great medicine man was slain and the march of Joseph, after that, was an ingenious and masterly retreat.

How the military column passed the steep pass on the morning of August 8, 1877, is told by one of the men who was there. "At 5 o'clock in the morning," writes this soldier, "the command started up the main divide of the Rocky mountains. Three miles of hard climbing were before them—three miles of steep mountain trail, filled with rocks and fallen trees. Teams were doubled and dragropes manned and at 11 o'clock, after six hours of hard, unremitting toil, the summit was reached. Just before the last wagon was up, a dispatch was received from the front stating that the trail was 'hot'; that the Indians were moving and that the discovery of the scouts would mean danger. The general read the dispatch and simply said: 'Keep the column closed.' And we pushed down the mountain. From time to time played-out mules were left along the trail, but the men never flinched. At bad crossings axes, shovels and picks were plied with desperate energy; the comrades in front were in danger. It seemed as if the men were doing all that nerve and muscle could do, but when later in the day a second courier met us with the news that the village was located, renewed life was thrown into the step and at sundown the column filed into Bradley's bivouac. After a scanty supper of hard bread and raw bacon, the tired men lay down to rest. The genial campfire, the stimulating coffee and the soothing pipe were forbidden."

There were abundant evidences of the terrific battle at the forks of Trail and Ruby creeks the first time I visited the ground, the trail to which leads over the pass which takes its name from the events of that terrible night and morning. Now they are nearly effaced. The monument which marks the site of the disastrous fight on the bluffs has been protected by a steel cage, else it, too, would have been razed by—not time—but ruthless relic-hunters.

Coming back over this trail the other day, I thought over its history and it seemed to me that, as I said at the outset of this story, there is no trail in all Montana which possesses greater historical significance than this.

Aug. 19, 1911.

LOCAL NAMES AND HISTORY

I HAVE an interesting letter this week from Frank D. Brown, historian of the Society of Montana Pioneers, regarding the preservation of the historical details of the making of Montana. Mr. Brown approves of these little stories of Montana trails and suggests that their scope be extended to cover more than the western Montana region which is The Missoulian's home. It is doubtful if this task, pleasant though it would be, can be undertaken at present. These stories have been written between-times in the busy hours of daily newspaper routine; an attempt has been made to set down in their lines some of the interesting facts of the early days of western Montana, as they have been recounted by the men and women who were participants in the scenes described. They are simple little stories, but they serve at least the purpose to preserve some incidents which otherwise might be forgotten, for the actors in these scenes are passing over the Long Trail and soon the chance to get from their lips the chapters of a history which should be preserved will be lost.

But what I have undertaken in this field others might take up in other parts of the state. There should be no time lost in this endeavor to perpetuate the story of Montana. And, right at the hand of each one of us, there is abundant material for an indefinite amount of this intimate history of the most interesting period of our state's building—a period which is not excelled in the charm of its incidents and their thrilling details. Every day we pass in our routine walks and rides the scenes of events which were important; the men who participated in them are our neighbors; they could tell us, if we would ask them, all of the little things which possess the real value of any history. If we do not pick up these stories now, we shall lose them, for it will not be long when these veterans pass beyond our reach.

Take, for instance, our own situation here in Missoula. I think the name of our town is the prettiest name I ever heard. There are not many visitors who come here who do not ask what it means and from what it came; there are not very many home folks who can answer the question. Unfortunately, the musical sound of the name Missoula is not mated with a pretty meaning. But the story of the origin of the name is none the less interesting and gives us a bit of insight into the life of the original inhabitants of this valley. It is an everyday affair now, the derivation of the University city's name, but one of these days there will be nobody to tell it unless it is set down in black and white. I doubt not that there are like conditions in every town in Montana; I know of a good many of them. These should be written now. Mr. Brown is right in this respect.

But, to the matter of this latest of the old trails that we are following this summer. Some of them have been hard to climb, though all of them have been deeply interesting. This one involves not even the changing of your shoes; it is right at home, but it tells a chapter in early Montana history that is worth preserving. Of all the men who have delved into the early lore of this state's territory, there is none whose opinion is worth more than that of the scholarly Father Palladino, revered priest of the Missoula parish and companion of the pioneer Jesuit missionaries who brought the Cross to the valleys of western Montana.

In his analysis of the origin of the name Missoula, Father Palladino says: "The full Indian name was likely 'Lm-i-sul-etiku,' or else 'Nm-i-sul-etiku,' contracted in pronunciation into 'Lm-i-sule,' or 'Nm-i-sule,' as I have heard it pronounced hundreds of times by the Indians and halfbreeds in this part of Montana. The 'l' and 'n' are prepositions and stand for 'at' 'in' or 'to'—the former letter being used more commonly by the Flatheads, while the Spokanes and Kalispells use the latter more frequently. Besides, these prefixes, when followed by 'm,' are scarcely heard in pronunciation and the 'm' on 'nm' stand frequently for 'nem,' which is the prefix of the future tense. From the radical 'i-sul,' or rather 'sul,' as the 'i' is here a prefix, expressing 'truly' or altogether,' and emphasizing the meaning of the root, are formed the derivative verbs, 'i-chin-sul'—'I am taken by surprise,' 'frightened,' 'chilled with fear' and the like —and 'jes-sulem'—'I take him by surprise,' or 'I chill him with fear.' The future tense of this verb would be 'nemsulem' or 'nm-i-sulem.' Whence 'lm-i-sul-etiku' or 'nm-i-sul-etiku' would seem to signify 'at the stream of surprise or ambush.' The 'etiku' standing—in—composition—for 'water' and here referring to the stream near the place described."

There is the philological analysis of the word, which the Indians used to describe—for all their names were descriptive—the mouth of the canyon just above Missoula city, the place where the waters of the Rattlesnake mingle with the current of the river. Taking the name from the Indians, the Hudson Bay men retained the idea in the appellation which they fixed upon the spot, "Porte d'Enfer." This their English successors translated literally and gave us "Hell Gate." The Indian name has clung to the city and its valley, while the harsher word has become fixed upon the canyon and the stream. In all the range of the Rocky mountains there is no finer gateway than is afforded by the canyon thus named. It is a natural route.

Indian and trapper, warrior and miner, priest and prospector—all followed this path through the hills into the beautiful valley where Missoula has grown. The first travelers came this way; they were followed by the pack trains; the stagecoach widened the trail and the railways followed the course of the stages. It was easily traversed, save for its narrowness in places. Also, it was singularly beautiful. Almost its entire length, the trail down the canyon led through a magnificent pine forest; the road was arched in places with the sprays of the wild brier; one of the early descriptions of this trail calls it the "Canyon of Wild Roses."

So, leading westward, there was little in the nature of the canyon or of its western gateway to suggest the terrible name which was attached to it. It was a delightful route and it led to a beautiful valley. Through fragrant forest it led and among arbors of bloom. Clear and sparkling was the stream which flowed along it and crystal springs gushed from its sides. Even yet, after a generation of the sway of the lumberman's axe and the devastating force of the railway builder's explosives, there remains much of the natural charm and beauty of this road through the hills.

Not, then, to its natural appearance can we look for the sources of the name which was applied to the western terminus of this nature-built roadway. There is naught in its charm to suggest the dire place whose name it has borrowed. Elsewhere we must seek for the derivation of the somber appellation which was given this canyon entrance. But it is not hard to find.

One of the passengers on the second ship sent to the Pacific coast by John Jacob Astor, just a hundred years ago, was a young Englishman named Cox, who afterward wrote a book upon his adventures among the Indians of the northwest. Aside from the journal of the Lewis and Clark expedition, this book contains the first description of the Indians of the Bitter Root and neighboring valleys. Cox spent a winter at the Astor trading post which was built at the mouth of the Missoula river, near where Paradise now stands. There he met many of the Flatheads and there he witnessed the return of one of their victorious war parties from the Blackfeet country. His description of this people and their ways contains this comment, which furnishes the key to the application of the name which was given to Missoula—the name which yet endures.

"The Flatheads were formerly much more numerous than they were at this period," writes Cox, "but owing to the constant hostilities between themselves and the Blackfeet Indians, their numbers had been greatly diminished. While pride, policy, ambition, self-preservation or the love of aggrandizement often deluges the civilized world with Christian blood, the only cause assigned by the natives of whom I write, for their perpetual warfare, is the love for the buffalo. There are extensive plains to the east of the mountains, frequented in the summer and autumnal months by great herds of buffalo. Hither the tribes of the river country repair to hunt these animals, that they may procure as much of their meat as will supply them until the succeeding season. In these expeditions they often meet and the most sanguinary conflicts follow. The Blackfeet claimed all that part of the country immediately at the foot of the mountains, east of the main range, which was most frequented by the buffalo; and alleged that the Flatheads, by resorting there to hunt, were intruders whom they were bound to oppose upon all occasions. The latter, on the contrary, asserted that their forefathers had always claimed and exercised the right of hunting on these disputed lands; and that while one of their warriors remained alive, the right should not be relinquished. The consequence of these continued wars was dreadful, particularly to the Flatheads, who being weaker in numbers, were generally the greater sufferers. Independent of their inferiority in this respect, their enemy had another great advantage in the use of firearms which they obtained from the company's trading posts, established in the department of Forts des Prairies. To those the Flatheads had nothing to oppose but bows and arrows and their own undaunted bravery. Every year previous to the coming of MacMillan's party witnessed the gradual diminution of their numbers and total annihilation would shortly have been the consequence but for the establishment of the post at the mouth of the Missoula, with a plentiful supply of arms and ammunition for trade. They were overjoyed at the opportunity to purchase them and quickly stocked themselves with a sufficient quantity of both. From this moment affairs took a decided change in their favor and in their subsequeent contests the numbers of killed and captured were more equal."

It is the testimony of all writers who have told us of the characteristics of the Flathead Indians as they were originally, that the tribe was peaceable, gentle and of superior intelligence. They did not seek war but they were brave in the defense of their rights. Lewis and Clark, Father DeSmet, Cox and Major Ronan have all left records to this effect. But the robes and the meat of the buffalo were, they held, the gift of the Great Spirit, and they were not to be deprived of the privilege of hunting on the eastern range. For this right they fought for generations and the record is that, despite superior numbers of their foes, they always brought back meat and hides from the buffalo country.

Through the canyon east of Missoula was their natural route to the east side hunting grounds. Take a walk into the canyon some day. Walk around the end of Mount Jumbo to where the canyon widens into the basin which reaches almost to the mouth of the Big Blackfoot. Look around on the east side of Jumbo and see what a perfect place for an ambush it affords. Down the stream which bears their name, came the Blackfeet at the time when they knew the Flatheads would be likely to start for the buffalo hunt. Then the ambush. There in that natural amphitheater, the battle.

These canyon walls have flung back the sound of many a warcry; the clash of combat has resounded many times in this basin; the soil has frequently been drenched with the blood of the combatants. The Flatheads fought bravely; they battled for their rights and they struck as long as there was breath in their bodies. The later chapters of this long warfare are filled with tales of glorious triumphs on the part of the west-side Indians; their possession of rifles and ammunition placed them upon terms of equality and they proved themselves to be no mean warriors. There is a story of the almost complete extermination of a Blackfeet band on what is now Post creek, which avenged the defeats of many years.

But these sanguinary conflicts in this hill-locked battlefield gave the entrance to the canyon the reputation which furnished its name. Finally the Flatheads no longer entered the canyon through its gateway. Until the settlement of the Rattlesnake valley and the slope on the eastern side of Mount Jumbo which was the battlefield of ages, there was a trail which was plainly visible, leading over the north end of the mountain from the Rattlesnake side. This trail led, on the other side, into the "Place of Ambush" in such a way that the field was plainly visible all the way down and it was almost impossible for the Blackfeet to waylay their hereditary antagonists. Even yet there are places where this old trail may be traced. Its summit affords a fine outlook over the basin which was for so many years the scene of bloodshed. It is a fine view and is worth the climb.

It is, however, the trail through the gateway of the canyon which won for this place the name, Missoula. Here were enacted the scenes which have been perpetuated in the nomenclature of the red man. "Missoula" tells it all if you only know what it means. And we came near to being known as "Hell Gate" for all time. This valley was called "Hell Gate ronde" for a long time and its town was Hell Gate for many years. Then

Captain Higgins founded Missoula with Major McCormick and Hell Gate moved bodily up toward the mouth of the canyon. It was a good move, even if it had done nothing more than to change the name of the town. But the old name sticks to the canyon and the upper river. Recently the geographical board has told us that the name of the river is to be Clark's Fork from now on. I think there should be a protest against that action. Missoula is a much finer name and it should be retained all the way down the stream. It is a name with a significance and it has a sweet sound.

Standing the other day on the old trail through the canyon and thinking over the matters that suggested this chapter in the Old Trails series, it occurred to me that, after all, the significance of the name, Missoula, can be made as pleasing as its sound. The "Place of Fright" has a good meaning or a sinister one, according to whether or not it is the right kind of fright which is created. Missoula might be made a place where evil things and evil doers would be afraid to appear; it might be made a place which would merit the literal interpretation of its name and that would be something worth while.

Hypocrisy and greed might be stamped out and the city might be made just the sort of place that we would like to have it. Four-flushers and bunco artists in the reform game might also be given the same fear in their hearts. Then we would have given a new interpretation to the name of the city, an interpretation which would be worth having blazoned upon the city seal. The environment of the city is in keeping with the musical sound of the name. Rippling waters course through it, the winds sing their songs in its trees, the bright faces of flowers add their laughter to the scene and gardens and orchards tell of the fertility of the land. So far the simile endures. Now if the proper translation can be given to the name, if the fright can be made the right sort, the name will be given significance and it will be a pleasure to translate it.

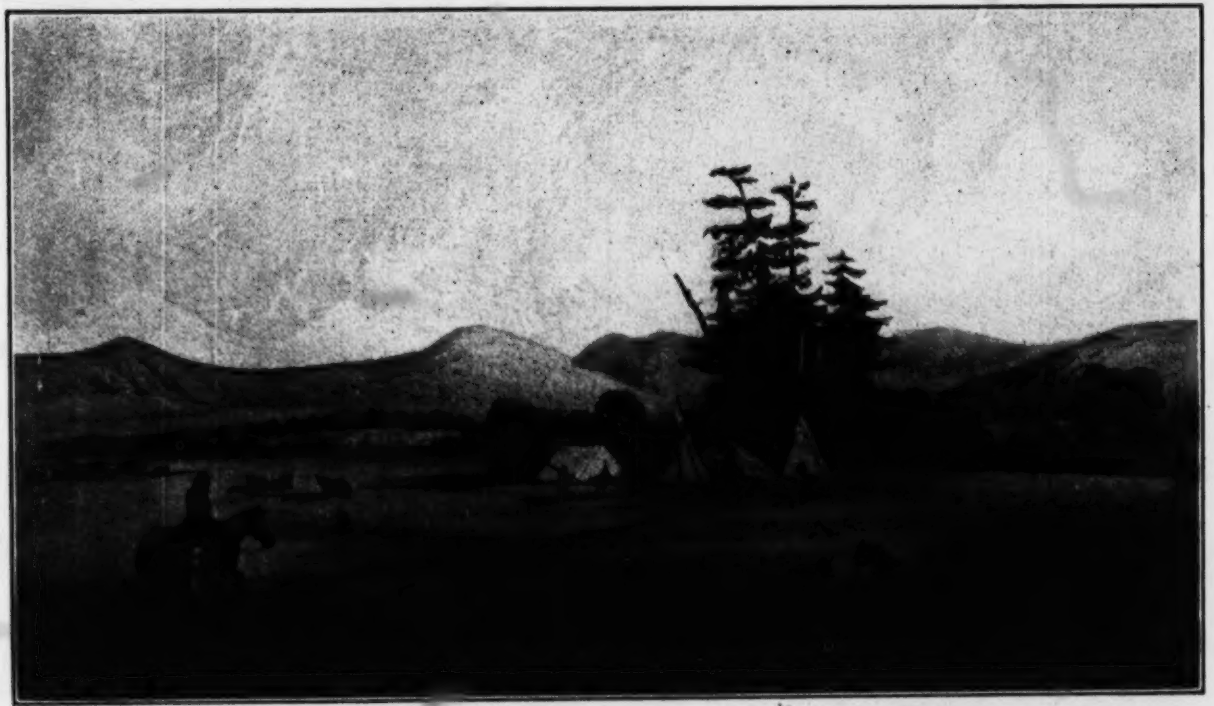
The name which the Indians gave, applied to the entrance to the canyon. That is why, probably, the voyageurs dubbed it "The Gate of Hell." Custom extended the application of the name to the entire length of the canyon and to the river and the trail which course between its walls. This is a canyon which has played an important and interesting part in Montana's history; many of the most notable incidents in the state's development were enacted in this canyon. It will require a good many trips and a good many meanderings to follow them all.

But it is always refreshing to recall that, just beyond Hell Gate, lies Paradise. That is pleasing and it is even more so when we consider that Missoula is on the Paradise side of the gate. Some years ago, the Northern Pacific undertook to simplify the names of some of its stations in western Montana. E. J. Pearson was then the local superintendent of the road and one day he showed me a letter that he had received, in which his correspondent wrote as follows:

"I see you have taken the 'Horse' from Plains and have removed the 'Falls' from Thompson. Will you be good enough to advise me early of any intention you may have of taking the 'Gate' from Hell?"

The "Gate" still hangs on its hinges. Unlike its prototype, however, it does not bid all who pass its portals to surrender hope. For this gate swings out—not in. It opens toward Paradise and Elysian fields and all who pass through the entrance-way gain new strength and new hope from the things which are upon our side of it. It is a queer name unless you know about it. When you understand it, it is the simplest proposition in the whole list of names. Just take the easy walk over this trail, look over the ground and you will understand this bit of old-time history.

August 26, 1911.



—From a Sketch Made for Stevens' Report, 1855.
Victor's Camp at Council Grove—Hell Gate in Background

COUNCIL GROVE

ABOUT nine miles below Missoula, on the banks of the Bitter Root river, there yet stand two of the tall pines which formed the famous Council Grove, beneath whose shade, early in July, 1855, Governor Stevens concluded the first treaty made with the Indians which now comprise the Confederated Tribes. This is one of the historically important spots in western Montana, yet it is passed daily by hundreds of people who do not give it a thought.

It was always—judging from the early accounts of the region—a beautiful place. Though it has changed much with the passing of time, it is yet beautiful. The broad meadows of 1855, dotted with a few pines and clumps of deciduous trees, have given place to great stretches of grain and of gardens. But even some of the old pines remain and the eternal hills maintain their watch over the peaceful valley which reaches away from the river skirting their base. Drive down the Grass Valley road, any day, and you will feel the spell of the place, but specially impressive is it in the golden days of Indian summer and in the wealth of harvest time.

It was a glorious setting which Governor Stevens selected for the council which he held with the kindred tribes of this region. It lies just below the confluence of the Missoula and Bitter Root rivers; the gentle murmer of the magnificent stream makes pleasant music on such a summer day as that upon which I visited the scene this week. In the north the rugged peaks of the Mission range form the horizon; eastward, Sentinel and Jumbo, impressive landmarks, guard the entrance to the great basin; southward stretches the broad sweep of the Bitter Root valley with its western wall of grand mountains, the snow of Lolo breaking into the blue of the sky; westward there is the continued sweep of the Bitter Root range and the marvelously fertile Frenchtown valley which extends from its base line. There are fields whose golden wealth is greater than that other gold for which men risked their lives in early days; there are groups of houses which tell of this wealth collected and made to benefit a thrifty people; there is an atmosphere of content and prosperity pervading all with the charm of the beauty of this famous spot everywhere felt.

There are few more beautiful spots in this vast region of scenic wonder. It is easy to understand how, in the midst of this scene, in the very heart of the region which was his home as it had been for ages the home of his people, old Chief Victor and his fiery rival, Alexander, hesitated about entering into an agreement which would deprive them of any portion of it or would in any manner circumscribe their rights in this splendid demesne, the home of their fathers, their ancestral realm. Also, it is easy to appreciate the keenness of the foresight of the chiefs who, two years before, had told Governor Stevens that they welcomed the visits of the white man who came hunting or who came "wearing swords," but they dreaded the approach of "the whites with plows, axes and shovels in their hands." After all, it was the farmers who conquered this country. The wise old Indian foresaw that it would be so.

And it was this treaty, made in this old Council Grove, which was the first step in the peaceful conquest of western Montana. The way had been smoothed by the presence of the Jesuit missionaries and was made easier by the counsel of the priests. But it was this treaty which gave the white man his first strong foothold upon this region which has become the garden spot of the west. And in this fact lies the great importance of the Stevens treaty. In this and in that other fact that the treaty expedition brought to this valley the man who was later to become the founder of Missoula and one of its most respected citizens. This man was the backbone of the expedition. It was he who declared, when even the Indian guides hestitated, that he would "go with Stevens to hell, if necessary." It was he who, ten years later, staked out the townsite of Missoula, and it was he who did much to build the little town into a fine city.

That man was Christopher P. Higgins—"Captain" Higgins of Missoula. He was the packmaster of the expedition, upon the rolls, but he was the adviser and counsellor of the leader, his help in trying times of threatened war and of impending mutiny. It was his physical prowess and indomitable courage which enabled the expedition to cross the Bitter Root river at its July flood stage and to reach the spot where the council was held. Always he was the pacemaker and the peacemaker. And it was in his capacity of pacemaker of the Stevens expedition that Captain Higgins first saw the beautiful valley which was to become his home and the scene of his life labor. How well he wrought and how keenly he observed is made clear by the city which he builded.

Governor Stevens came to the country of the Selish—misnamed Flatheads—from his council with the Nez Perces, their cousins across the range. He had come out of the Nez Perce country by way of the Coeur d'Alene river, past the old mission and through the basin which is now the greatest lead-mining region in the world, over the pass where now two transcontinental railways cross the Bitter Root range, down the St. Regis river and then up the Missoula, which he calls the Bitter Root in his report.

It was July Fourth when the expedition crossed the river. This was at a point fixed by Stevens as 55 miles below the Council Grove, which would make it somewhere near St. Regis, as we know the country at present. The Stevens report describes the river as, at this point, "one hundred and fifty yards wide, with a swift, strong current, and fordable only at the lowest stages of water in fall and winter." When the expedition reached it, the river was at flood height and the problem of getting across was serious. The men were at once started upon the construction of rafts.

While the rafts were building, a large band of Indians, encamped nearby, took down their lodges and ferried themselves across the swollen stream with all their impedimenta in less than an hour, their primitive method being so effective as to astonish the whites. Their crossing at this time was evidently a bit of irony—it was their joke at the expense of the clumsy invaders—but there was no smile to indicate the purpose of the hurried ferry. This method of the Indians is well known to the old-timers. The buffalo hides which formed the covering of the lodges, were spread out at the water's edge and all the blankets and provisions, arms and other equipment were piled upon them; then their corners were drawn up and securely tied, forming huge bundles as we now tie up a handkerchief. The squaws, pappooses and dogs climbed upon these, and the bucks, swimming their horses, towed the huge bundles across. Governor Stevens describes the scene as curious and exciting, but the women and children, riding on the queer craft, took it as a matter of course.

But the whites kept on with their rafts—they would not risk the Indian method. There were three of the rafts built from logs. Two of them were poled safely across, the animals swimming. When it came to getting the third over, an incident occurred which illustrates the importance of Captain Higgins as a member of the party. This last raft was the largest of the three. It bore the governor and his party and became unmanageable. It was carried far down the stream and was swept into a swifter current that threatened to wreck it, when Captain Higgins seized a pack rope and leaped into the raging stream. He swam to shore and landed his rope; but the speed of the raft had become so great that he could not check it. Racing along the bank to keep pace with the raft, he clung to the rope until he came to a big tree, around which he threw a turn of the rope, checking the raft which then swung into shore. The unwieldly craft had been swept two miles down the stream.

Two days were spent marching up the valley from the point of crossing. The party was impressed by the beauty of the region and Stevens refers often to the clearness of the river and the abundance of fish. On the morning of the 7th of July, soon after breaking the camp, the party was met by the 300 braves of the Flathead, Kootenai, Upper and Lower Pend d'Oreilles. The reception was most cordial. There was a salute of musketry, followed by a display of horsemanship, and the visitors were escorted to the Indian camp, a mile or more up the Missoula river. Greetings exchanged with the chiefs, Governor Stevens moved to the lower stream and selected the site for his camp and for the council. In the afternoon there was a brief parley with Chief Victor of the Flatheads, Alexander of the Pend d'Oreilles and Michel of the Kootenais. This was Saturday. An agreement was reached for a council on Monday and the camps separated.

On Monday, July 9, at 1:30 o'clock in the afternoon the great council began, the chiefs having returned according to their promise. Governor Stevens opened the session in a speech in which he explained at length the terms offered by the government in case the Indians made a treaty to live on a reservation and expatiating upon the advantages which would follow the acceptance of these terms. The Indians, always friendly to the whites, had no objection to the general proposition of a reservation agreement; their differences were not with the whites. But there was a serious stumbling block in the way of adoption of the Stevens proposition and this lay in the chronic objection of each tribe of leaving its own country and going to live elsewhere, in the country of other Indians. Upon this rock they split and for eight days the council was racked by debate and denunciation. It required all the persistence and diplomacy of Governor Stevens, all of his knowledge of the Indian character and all of his eloquence to bring the Indians to an agreement. But, after eight days, this was done.

The governor required the three tribes, as they were really one people—all Selish—speaking a common language and closely intermarried and allied, and, further, as their numbers were small, to unite upon one reservation. He offered to agree upon the upper Bitter Root or the Horse Plains and Jocko valleys as the reservation upon which all should go, urging the Indians to decide upon one or the other of these locations. The Bitter Root was Victor's home country and the Jocko and Plains valleys were the home of the Pend d'Oreilles. Neither tribe was willing to leave its own country, and about this point the long debate centered for the eight days of the council.

On the opening day, following the governor's opening statement, Victor and Alexander made lengthy replies. Michel seems to have been dominated by Alexander, who usually spoke for both. Victor did his own talking except on one day when he refused to speak at all and left the council in dudgeon, "to think it over." In his opening speech, Victor voiced the weariness of his people over the generations-long warfare with the Blackfeet and their desire to come under the protection of the whites, but he was non-committal on the matter of selecting a reservation site. He claimed the chieftainship of the entire region, holding that the allied tribes were sub-divisions of his people. "I have two places," he said. "Here is mine (pointing to the Flathead and Clark's Fork country). I will think of it and will tell you which is best. I believe you wish to assist me to help my children here so they may have plenty to eat and so that they may save their souls."

Alexander expressed doubt as to his ability to induce his young men to enter into the agreement or to abide by it. He was shy of the white man's laws. He did not know what to do. "Now this is my ground," he concluded. "We are poor, we Indians. The priest is settled over there (in the Jocko); there, where he is, I am satisfied. I will talk hereafter about the ground. I am done for today."

There were other brief talks by sub-chiefs and the first day's session adjourned, the Indians going to their own camp and entering into a council of their own. The second day, Tuesday, developed nothing new except that it revealed the fact that the Indians had talked very earnestly in their private council. They had discussed the promises which Stevens had made to them two years before and some of them held that these had not been kept. They argued if the pledges of 1853 had been broken, the new ones would not help the Indian. The important speech of the second day was made by Big Canoe, a Pend d'Oreille chief, who said:

"Talk about treaty; when did I kill you? When did you kill me? What is the reason we are talking about treaties? We are friends. We never spilt the blood of one of you. I never saw your blood. I want my country. I thought no one would ever want to talk about my country. Now you talk, you white men. Now I have heard, I wish the whites to stop coming. Perhaps you will put me into a trap if I do not listen to you, white chiefs. It is our land, both of us. If you make a farm, I would not go there and pull up your crops. I would not drive you away from it. If I were to go to your country and say, 'Give me a little piece,' I wonder would you say, 'Here, take it.' I expect that is the same way you want me to do here. This country you want to settle here, me with you. You tell us, 'Give us your land.' I am very poor. This is all the small piece I have got. I am not going to let it go."

There followed a general discussion, which resulted in Victor's agreement with the reservation plan, but developed his unwillingness to have the reservation anywhere but in the Bitter Root. Alexander and Michel also gave approval to the union of the tribes, but did not commit themselves as to location. They were asked to talk it over some more.

Wednesday's council was fruitless, and a messenger was sent to the mission to summon Father Hoecken in the hope that his influence might help. Thursday was given up to a feast and Indian powwow. Friday was no better, except that Ambrose, a Flathead chief, explained that, in the Indian council, Alexander and Michel had agreed to move into Victor's country and live there, but Victor would not speak. Then Stevens put the question to Victor again, but the chief mereely said he would not talk. The governor berated him: "Is Victor not a chief? Or is he, as one of his people called him, an old woman? Dumb as a dog? If Victor is a chief, let him speak now."

That brought a talk, all right. Victor said he had not understood the offer of Alexander to be as stated. He did realize that there was some question as to Victor's sovereignty and he would not consent to see anybody placed over him. He wanted to do what was best for his people. Then he stalked out of the council. Some of his chiefs made excuses for him and said he had gone to think it over. Stevens told them all to go and think it over with him and reach an agreement.

On Saturday, Victor sent word that he had not made up his mind; he was yet thinking it over. The council was adjourned until Monday, and Sunday the Indians kept very much to themselves. Victor brooded over the fancied attempt to deprive him of his leadership.

Monday was the eighth day. Father Hoecken had come from the mission and gave assurance that he was in no way opposing the completion of the treaty. It was 11 o'clock Monday morning when the council convened, and Victor was ready to talk. He opened the session, which was to be, it developed, the last. Victor opened the council with the proposition which became the basis of the treaty. Its vagueness led to later difficulties with the Flatheads after Victor was dead. But it was the thing that brought about the agreement at Council Grove. This is what Victor said:

"I am now going to talk. I was not content. You gave me a very small place. Then I thought they are giving away my land. That is my country over there at the mission, this also.

Plenty of you say Victor is chief of the Flatheads. The place you pointed out above is too small. From Lolo fork, above, all should be mine. * * * We will send this word to the Great Father, 'Come and look at our country.' When you look at Alexander's place and say the land is good and say "Come Victor," I will go. If you think this above is good land, then Victor will say, "Come here, Alexander," and then our children will be content.' That is the way we will make the treaty, my father."

Governor Stevens at once accepted the proposition, as far as he himself was concerned and asked Alexander and Michel if they would do the same. The agreement was presented. Victor signed. There was a dramatic pause—then Alexander and Michel followed. The treaty was an accomplished fact. The way was opened to a final settlement of the question of location.

Presents were distributed among the 1,200 Indians present. There was feasting. Governor Stevens was delighted. But there lurked in the breasts of the chiefs that jealous distrust of each other which appeared again in the next generation; it was at best a makeshift. It was, however, important. It opened the way. The trouble which followed the attempt to carry out the provisions of the treaty is another story. The signing of the document at Council Grove made it possible for Governor Stevens to proceed across the range to the Buffalo Country, there to go into the famous council with the Blackfeet—but that was another trail, to be followed later.

Sept. 2, 1911.

CHARLOT'S LAST MARCH

PERHAPS there are more beautiful trails in this world than that which leads from old St. Mary's mission at Stevensville, in the heart of the Bitter Root, to the valley in which the Jocko agency nestles at the foot of the mountains which rise abruptly from its fertile slope. If there are any trails more beautiful than this, I have never seen any of them. Certainly there are few trails anywhere which possess the sad—tragic, I had almost said—associations which cluster about this road.

It was along this trail that grim old Charlot made his last march. After years of determined and, at times, defiant, struggle against the inroads of white settlement, the stern and embittered chief yielded to the inevitable and with the little remnant of his people turned his back upon the valley which had been his ancestral home and marched to the place allotted to him on the Jocko reservation. Charlot is dead. Next Monday his people will travel back over the old trail to Stevensville to join with the people of that town in their celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the departure of the Indians.

This week I spent a good deal of time along portions of this trail. The splendor of autumn was over the towering mountains, the glory of the harvest time was upon the valley. The breeze which wafted down from St. Mary's peak was tingling with the crispness of late summer. The water in the river was clear as crystal as it murmured along beneath overhanging trees. The incomparably beautiful Bitter Root landscape was never more appealing—grand mountains, rolling valleys, broad meadows, dense groves, the bluest sky that spans the earth, the brightest sun that shines upon it and the intoxicating atmosphere of this western realm.

Upon just such a morning did Charlot, chieftain and the son of chieftains, bid good-bye to the valley which had always been his home as it had been the home of his fathers. Looking over the scene the other day as I walked from the mission over toward Fort Owen, I could easily understand the bitterness which filled the heart of the old man as he marched away from all that was dear to him, to make a new home for himself and his people

Michel Revais (left) and Chief Charlot.

These two were for years notable figures in Flathead councils. Michel, blind almost from childhood, was gentle, intelligent and loyal—one of the really trustworthy Indians. He was a great help in the treaty negotiations. Charlot, chief and son of chiefs, was truly a royal Indian. His face is stern but nobility is there. This is the last picture ever made of the two. It was taken by Superintendent Morgan of the Flathead agency.

in a place he did not like and under conditions which were humiliating to him and which broke his old heart.

His father had refused to leave the valley. Old Victor had fought with all his Indian wily diplomacy to retain the dwelling place which he and his people loved so dearly. And with the fight against the removal of his tribe there had been interwoven a struggle for his supremacy as the titular head of the people he ruled. To both of these struggles his son had fallen heir when he inherited the symbols of tribal authority and bravely had he maintained the contest.

Deceived by the agents of the government, betrayed by the special representatives of the president, conspired against by some of his own people, trusting only the few whites who were his close neighbors—the odds were heavy against the sturdy old fellow, but he resisted steadfastly. As Victor had sought to retain his home in argument with General Stevens in 1855, so did Charlot maintain the struggle in debate with General Garfield in 1872.

But, in the end he was beaten. It was not, however, the argument of the white man which convinced him against his will. It was not the threat of the emissary of the Great Father which daunted him into submission to the government's will. It was the suffering of his people, the wails of the starving children of his tribe, their destitution, their nakedness and hopelessness that touched his heart and led him into acquiescence with the will of the Great Father at Washington.

And, as he marched forth from St. Mary's with his people, with the benediction of his priest upon his head, with these memories in his mind and with the bitterness in his heart which came from a consciousness of the deceit that had been practiced against him—it is not to be wondered that he was sore and sullen.

It was the year after this exodus that I first saw and talked with Charlot. He would talk to me of everything except the Bitter Root; of his old home there was no word. I had gone to him with the approval of Mrs. Ronan, whom Charlot reverenced for her tenderness, and he knew that I was friendly. Whatever else I asked him on that Sunday afternoon in the Jocko valley, he answered readily enough. But of the Bitter Root, no word. Nor would he, to the end, have aught to say of the beautiful place he had left. It was a painful subject to him and no one who knew him ever pressed it upon him. During his later days he softened somewhat. He came to regard Fred Morgan, superintendent of the reservation, as a trusted friend and his last days were the most peaceful he had known.

But there was none of that peace in his heart when he set forth that October morning, 20 years ago, to lead his people to their new home, prescribed by the government and made necessary by the impoverished condition of his tribe. His good-bye had been said to his old friends at Stevensville; he had severed the ties. He said he would never return. As nearly as I can learn, he never did return, except once when he was brought to the valley as a witness in a lawsuit over a water right in which his old friend, Abe Mittower, was involved. It is said that he did not go to Stevensville then; he went with his friend to look over the ground on the hills.

Down the river he marched his people. Through the fields where they had played as children and had hunted as men, fields which they had never stained with white man's blood, fields upon whose bosom they had been nurtured and beneath whose breast their fathers slept, they marched in solemn train. Not in haste, not in disorder, not in an uproar, but slowly, with dignity and in silence they moved out from the mission. Out past Owen and across the river and then down the valley, ever amid scenes which had been their daily environment for a lifetime, each step reluctant and each mile a pang. There was a night camp in the Missoula valley and then the march to Jocko was resumed in the morning—so deliberate was the retreat of the vanquished warrior. In the afternoon the Flatheads entered the Jocko valley. Charlot's last march was ended.

The events which led up to this departure are interesting. They reveal the utter lack of honor which characterized many of the government representatives in their dealings with the Indians; they make plain the duplicity which too often governed the negotiations with the reds; they awaken sympathy with the Indian and they furnish ample reason for the bitter hatred which Charlot bore to everything which bore a Washington postmark and to everybody who hailed from the capital. Governor Stevens understood the Indian; he dealt with him as man with man; he made promises which were intended to be kept.

It was in 1855 that Stevens concluded his treaty with the Flatheads and their kindred tribes at Council Grove, below Missoula. Victor, the father of Charlot, had ceded, in this treaty, a large area in which is now western Montana; upon yielding this region, Victor had insisted that his people retain that portion of the Bitter Root valley above Lolo creek. But there had been an alternative clause agreed to, which empowered the president to make surveys and to determine from them whether it was better for the Flatheads to remain in the Bitter Root or to go to the Jocko reservation. Until 1872 there had been no survey made nor had the government kept its promise to send carpenters, blacksmiths, artisans and school teachers to the tribe as had been promised in the treaty.

Consequently the Indians resisted a presidential order, made in 1871, which declared that the Indians should be transferred to the Jocko valley. Congress appropriated $5,000 to defray the expenses of removal and in 1872 General Garfield was dispatched to the Bitter Root to arrange a treaty covering the removal. It was in August, 1872, that Garfield came to the valley. He said in his official report that he found the Indians unwilling to move because for 17 years the government had taken no step to carry out the provisions of the Hell Gate treaty. However, General Garfield prepared an agreement, which was published as having been signed by Charlot, first chief of the Flatheads; Arlee, second chief of the Flatheads; Adolf, third chief of the Flatheads—these as principals—and William H. Claggett, D. G. Swain, W. F. Sanders, J. A. Vail and B. F. Potts, then governor of Montana, as witnesses.

This treaty contained the provisions that the Flatheads should move to Jocko; that the government should build 60 houses for them; that 600 bushels of wheat should be delivered to the Indians the first year; that land be broken and fenced for the Indians and they be given agricultural implements; that the $5,000 appropriated for their removal be given to the Indians; that the sum of $50,000 be paid to them in ten annual installments and that the Indians should move as soon as the houses were built for them at Jocko, except such as chose to take up land in the Bitter Root valley in the regular manner.

Charlot was outraged when he learned that it had been published that he had signed the treaty. He declared he had never signed it and that he had told the commissioner that he would not sign it, but that he would never go, alive, to the Jocko. His sense of honor was wounded; his dignity was shocked; his last bit of trust in the whites was shattered.

Meanwhile, the houses were built near the agency at Jocko. Arlee, with his personal following, who had recognized the Garfield treaty, moved to their reservation, and Arlee was designated by the government as the chief of the Flatheads. This added to the resentment of Charlot. He persisted in his declaration that he had never signed the treaty and that he was not bound by its provisions. And he held the fort at Stevensville.

Major Ronan had become agent of the Flatheads; he sympathized with Charlot, but he recognized the futility of the continued resistance of the old chief, and sought to dissuade him from his course. The Bitter Root was settling rapidly. The hunting grounds of the Flatheads were gone. They were starving. More than that, the crowding of the settlers called for their removal. The matter got to congress.

Senator Vest of Missouri and Major Maginnis, Montana's delegate in congress, were named as a special commission to investigate conditions. They visited the Jocko agency and then went to Stevensville. They investigated the conditions. They listened to Charlot's story. They heard Father Ravalli's account of the case. They concluded that Charlot was absolutely correct and they forced from General Garfield, later, the admission that Charlot had not signed the treaty. The original document on file at Washington did not bear the old man's mark. Garfield's explanation of the publication of the treaty as having been signed by Charlot was that he deemed it best to proceed as if Charlot had signed, as he felt that Charlot, when he saw the work progressing, would conclude to join with the "other chiefs" and keep the tribe unbroken. It showed how little Garfield knew Charlot.

Vest and Maginnis were much impressed by the honesty and dignity of Charlot. Their report expresses regret that Garfield committed the act of misrepresentation, as it had wronged the chief and had doubly embittered him, especially as the act of the department had placed Arlee, whom Charlot characterized as a "Renegade Nez Perce," at the head of the tribe. The commissioners talked earnestly with Charlot, urging him to accept the terms of the treaty and promised to do all they could to see that he was treated right. But the old man was too bitter and sore at heart.

In 1884, Major Ronan took Charlot and five of his sub-chiefs to Washington for conference with the president and the secretary of the interior. There were further promises made to Charlot if he would consent to the removal, but he would not yield. He was told that he might remain in the Bitter Root as long as he was friendly with the whites—this he had always been; he had saved them from dire disaster on more than one occasion. The expedition returned with no better result than a clearer understanding on Charlot's part. He had learned that Major Ronan was his friend and when, a year later, there was a distribution of supplies to the Bitter Root band, he softened considerably. Wagons, horses and plows were also issued and an attempt was made, through Ronan's influence, to give the Indians a chance to make good on their located lands.

And so time wore on. The Indians were not successful farmers and their condition became deplorable. General Carrington was sent in 1891 to try to induce Charlot to move. Arlee had died and conditions were such that it was felt that the old chief might at last consent. And this hope was, it proved, well founded. Charlot talked with Major Ronan. He also called in some of his Bitter Root friends. He consulted with Amos Buck and with the father of Dave Whaley, who gave me this account of Charlot's speech after the old chief had reached his decision:

"I will go—I and my children. My young men are becoming bad; they have no place to hunt. My women are hungry. For their sake I will go. I do not want the land you promise.

I do not believe your promises. All I want is enough ground for my grave. We will go over there."

Immediately the arrangements were made. Charlot's last march was begun. In the afternoon of the next day, October 17, 1891, he reached the new home of his people in the Jocko. Major Ronan had hastened ahead and was at the agency to greet the old chief, whose people, also, received him with proper demonstration. Mrs. Ronan, who witnessed the reception, gives this account of the end of the march from the Bitter Root:

"It was a unique and, to some minds, pathetic spectacle, when Charlot and his band of Indians marched to their future home, the Jocko reservation. Their coming had been heralded and many of the reservation Indians had gathered at the agency to give them welcome. When within a mile of the agency church, the advancing Indians spread out into a broad column. The young men kept constantly discharging their firearms, while a few of the number mounted on fleet ponies, arrayed in fantastic Indian paraphernalia, with long blankets partially draping the forms of the warriors and steeds, rode back and forth in front of the advancing caravan, shouting and firing their guns until they neared the church, where a large banner of the Sacred Hearts of Mary and Jesus was erected on a tall pole. Near the sacred emblem stood a valiant soldier of Jesus Christ, Rev. Ph. Canistrelli, S. J. With outstretched hands the good priest blessed and welcomed the forlorn looking pilgrims. Chief Charlot's countenance retained its habitual expression of stubborn pride and gloom, as he advanced on foot, shaking hands with all who had come to greet him. After the handshaking was over, all assembled in the agency chapel to the benediction of the most Holy Sacrament. The 'O Salutaris' and 'Tantum Ergo' chanted by those untutored children of the forest, told better than any other words could of the patient teachings of the Jesuit fathers. Every word of the beautiful Latin verses sounded as distinct as if coming from cultivated voices. If the poor creatures reflected on the meaning of these words:

'Bella premunt hostilia,
Da robur, fer auxilium,'

they must have felt that the touching sentiment truly expressed the feeling of their hearts. After the benediction, the good and learned Father Canistrelli, who has spent may years laboring among the Indians, striving to enlighten their hearts, addressed them in their own language. The good words seemed to console and comfort them, if the peaceful expression of their countenances indexed aright their minds."

Such was the end of Charlot's last march. At its end he did not find immediately the peace which had been promised him.

To the last he nursed his grievances and they were many. Genuine wrongs he had and he brooded over them until they magnified and multiplied. He never loved the Jocko. He was never reconciled to this change of homes. Some satisfaction he found in the bettered condition of his people and that was all. He distrusted all whites. Had it not been for the indorsement which I brought him at first from Mrs. Ronan and the subsequent recommendation which Major Catlin gave me—the major had been one of Charlot's trusted Stevensville friends—I doubt if any of the several visits which I made at the Jocko cabin would have been as pleasant and as satisfactory as they were. But I gained an insight into the old man's heart that always gives me sympathy even with his utter stubbornness. If the whites had been as honest with him as he was with them, his last days would have been happier.

As I walked along the route of his last march the other day I could nct help thinking of this thing. The beauty of the valley which he loved so much and all of the associations which gathered about its scenes must have been constant visions before his sightless eyes during those last bitter years. And the memory of that last sad march down the valley must have been a painful thought for him. Next Monday his people will march again over the old trail, but it will be a travesty of that march of 20 years ago.

Sept. 9, 1911.

BACK TO THE BITTER ROOT

THE JAUNT of the Bitter Root Indians over the old trail which they traversed twenty years ago, a jaunt which took them back to Stevensville, was a decided success. This was the first time the trail had been traveled by the entire tribe since old Charlot led them forth for the last time from the valley which was their ancestral home. A week ago I recalled some of the incidents which attended the exodus of Charlot's people. It was one of the most pathetic stories in western Montana's history. During the week there have been many interesting reminiscences among the men, white and red, who were figures in the incidents which made the autumn of 1891 a memorable season in the central Bitter Root.

During the week I talked with a good many of the people who were participants in the scenes of those weeks twenty years ago. Naturally, the theme upon which all lingered was the attitude of Charlot in oppoing the removal of his people from the Bitter Root. I have always believed that Charlot told the truth when he declared that he had never signed the Garfield treaty, even though it was published bearing his signature. In this belief, all those who knew Charlot well share. The priests who were his counsellors, Major Ronan, who was his good friend, Mrs. Ronan, who had his confidence as much as anybody, Major Catlin, who was his close friend for many years at Stevensville, Amos Buck and all the old residents of the central valley—these have at one time or another expressed unqualifiedly the opinion that Charlot told the truth when he said that he had not signed the Garfield agreement.

"I know positively that Charlot did not sign the treaty," said Mrs. Ronan to me the other day. "Major Ronan had at the agency the duplicate copy of the agreement which was given him to keep for the Indians. I saw it many times and we often looked at it again when the controversy was renewed. I know that the name of Charlot did not have his mark beside it. He was stubborn and sour, but he was always honest, and he grieved much that the whites, whom he said he had always helped when he could, should have done him this wrong. General Carrington believed Charlot. It was the fact that he believed the old fellow and understood him, that made it possible for General Carrington to accomplish what others had failed to do.

"General Carrington came out here first in 1889. He made Charlot's acquaintance then and heard his story. We were pleased that General Carrington took the view he did of the situation; from the first we were sure he would eventually succeed. And he did. He discussed the situation very thoroughly with Major Ronan and returned to the east with an excellent understanding of the situation."

Mrs. Ronan has a letter which General Carrington wrote to Major Ronan after he had ended his first visit here. It shows how thoroughly he had grasped the situation and gives an insight into his policy which was the only one which could have won Charlot. In this letter, General Carrington made the plans for his subsequent visit, which proved successful. This is what he wrote:

"Please advise Chief Charlot Victor that I desire another interview with him. He is the only living Flathead chief. He has the right and the ability to decide many minds which look to him for words of wisdom. If times have changed and he sees now what he could not see years ago, that the very existence of his tribe depends very much upon his action now, he will feel that it is worthy the character and dignity of a great chief to decide differently from his former decision. Any Indian who would find fault and say that Chief Charlot changed his mind, does not understand that it is only a wise and able chief who has the courage to change his mind when times change. The Indian gave up the arrow and bow because the gun made them useless. So the Bitter Root valley patents are becoming surrounded by white settlement and are useless to the Indians. The reservation gives a home for the whole tribe. I must proceed to appraise the patented lands. The Indians refused to accept their patents, but the government wishes to give them the value of those lands, the same as if they did accept them. They went on the lands and made some improvements. The improvements will also be appraised for their benefit. I wish to have Michel explain to Chief Charlot why I desire to see him again here, before going to his home in the Bitter Root valley. I think if Chief Charlot would lead his people and say so, on paper, now, he would have a light heart once more and feel that the spirit of Victor said to him: 'Charlot, save our people.' The tribe would be happy. Only men who are jealous of Charlot and other Indians who are jealous of the Flatheads would talk foolish. Brave men and wise men would say: 'Charlot is a wise chief and has the courage to conquer his own opinion, when change comes, for his people's sake.' Please advise Charlot at once."

How well the seed was planted in the heart of Charlot by this letter was made evident when General Carrington returned for the final negotiations. In the two years which intervened, Charlot conquered his own spirit. He saw in the light which Carrington turned on. General Carrington, better than anybody else since Stevens, had the right system for dealing with the Indians. It is true that Charlot complained, later, that some of the promises of Carrington were not kept, but the old chief must have been the victim of incompetent or indifferent interpreters. There were times during the negotiations when Michel and Francois were both compelled to be at the Jocko agency and then Carrington was obliged to depend upon the interpretation of Mary Lumphrey, a well-meaning woman, but not thoroughly competent. It is likely that it was her fault that Charlot obtained a wrong impression. Every official record shows that the word of Carrington was kept to the letter.

This week the tribe came back. To the younger members, the excursion was in the nature of a pleasure junket. To the older members, it was—no matter what they thought when they started—a solemn occasion. Every ridge in the mountains that overlook the valley recalled to them the old days, when this was their home and when they were unmolested and unchallenged in its possession; every turn in the river had some suggestion of the days when they fished and hunted along its banks; it was their old home and the homecoming reminded them again of the sacrifice they had made. Inevitable was that sacrifice, of course; it had to come; but each one of the old members of the tribe knows how little his people received in exchange for what they gave up. The reminiscences which were prompted by the homecoming were not all pleasant, then. There was a strain of sadness and of regret running through them all. Some of the guests of Stevensville this week had not been in the old town since that October day, twenty years ago, when they followed their old chief down the main street of the town and started on their last march away from the mission.

But the tribe is vastly better off now than it was when Charlot consented to go forth from the Bitter Root. There is no question that it is better off than it would have been had Charlot not receded from his position. Never in the old days were the Indians as well dressed, as gaily caparisoned and as well fed as they were this week. Their parade was gorgeous; they had evidently laid themselves out to impress their old neighbors with the idea that the tribe had done well in leaving the Bitter Root. But they had good appetites and the Bitter

Root beef tasted good to them. Nor did they seek to disguise the fact. They ate with gusto—also with their fingers.

There were, however, some of the older Indians, to whom the return visit brought recollections which were melancholy. Moiese, sturdy chieftain that he is, is one of those who have never lost their love for the valley which was their old home. It was with some reluctance that he consented to take part in the celebration. He was not sure he wanted to see Stevensville again. But he yielded and, once he was in sight of St. Mary's, he was glad he came. He gazed long at the grand old peak and many times during the stay in the valley he became lost in contemplation of the splendid old mountain in whose shadow his early life had been spent. Moiese is a character. He, of all the tribe, possesses the ideals which governed Charlot, perhaps to the same extent. He loves the valley. Say what you will of the lack of sentiment in the Indian, your belief would all be shattered were you to talk with Moiese when he is communicative.

"I don't know why my people were driven from the valley," said Moiese Wednesday, as he sat in his camp in the old Fort Owen field. "When we lived here in the old days, we were many people. Now this is all of us—and his arm swept around in a gesture which included the camp—we are few. The Black Robes sent answer to us that they would teach us the new religion if we would come to meet them. We went over the hills there—and he pointed to the Big Hole pass—six days to a great prairie. There we met them. They came to us and they taught us. Since then our people have died. I think it is too much study. They taught us to drink. Before the Black Robes came and we lived in this valley, each year we used to choose a boy and send him to the top of the mountain—St. Mary's—and he fasted there and made medicine for the people. Then he came back and we were well. That was all the studying we had to do then. Up on the mountain where the boy went there was, long ago, a cottonwood tree, but it died. My father told me about it. He had seen it. Under this tree there was many pebbles. Everybody who went there put some of those pebbles in his shirt to bring back to the valley, but nobody ever brought one down. Always they were lost before the foot of the mountain was reached. They could not be brought away. But in those days we were happy. The valley was our home. If we had not learned to think, we would not have been driven out."

There was another good story told to me during the week. When General Carrington was told that Charlot had arrived to talk with him, the general did not at once go to meet him. He donned his full military uniform, as calculated to make a better impression upon the chief than the civilian clothes in which he had been attired during his conference with Major Ronan. Then he went out to receive the chief. It was well—as the general discovered—that the thought had occurred to him to wear the regimentals. For Charlot was decked out in style, himself. His poverty showed in every thread of his costume, but he was bravely clad in regal fashion. The stovepipe hat which many of us remember topped his head. Over his shoulder and across his breast he had thrown a beaded sash and wristlets and anklets to match this sash were drawn over his shabby clothes. Mrs. Ronan has a photograph of Charlot, taken as he waited for the general.

Louison is another of the chiefs who survives. He was helpful in bringing Charlot to a right way of thinking. Michel, the blind interpreter, was another helpful Indian. He was a loyal assistant to Major Ronan and General Carrington in the negotiations. But of all those concerned in the council and of all who dealt with the Flatheads in those days, there was none who did as much as did Major Ronan. A photograph, taken by F. M. Ingalls of Missoula, during the course of the negotiations while the party was passing back and forth between Jocko and Stevensville, shows Major Ronan, General Carrington, Michel and Louison. Upon a copy of this photograph which he presented to Mrs. Ronan, General Carrington wrote this inscription:

"Mrs. Mary Ronan will please accept with my regards, this picture in which I am happy to be associated with her husband who, more than any other man, has worked for the welfare of the Flathead Indians.—Henry B. Carrington, U. S. A."

These are a few of the interesting sidelights which this week developed in connection with the twentieth anniversary of Charlot's last march. The week has been interesting, extremely so. The scenes connected with the celebration in Stevensville were picturesque; the Indians were never more impressive in their demonstrations. Perhaps it was the paucity of their numbers which made it so, as much as anything else. The delegation which came down from Jocko to revisit the old tribal home was practically the whole tribe as it is today. It was a prosperous delegation, but it was small; its reduced numbers told of what is happening with the red man.

I don't believe there will be any desire on the part of the older members of the tribe to visit Stevensville again in celebration. They had a fine reception and the Stevensville people were hospitable in the extreme. It was a memorable occasion. But it was sorrowful for some of the older men and women. The visit revived old memories and freshened old wounds. Each of the old men, warriors once, and good ones, will tell you—if he talks to you—of the olden friendship of his people for the whites. He will tell you of the times when the Flatheads protected the whites from massacre or from robbery. He will relate incidents in which he, himself, participated. Then he will say that the white man has repaid this friendliness in poor sort.

And, if you were an Indian, would you not view the matter in the same way? L

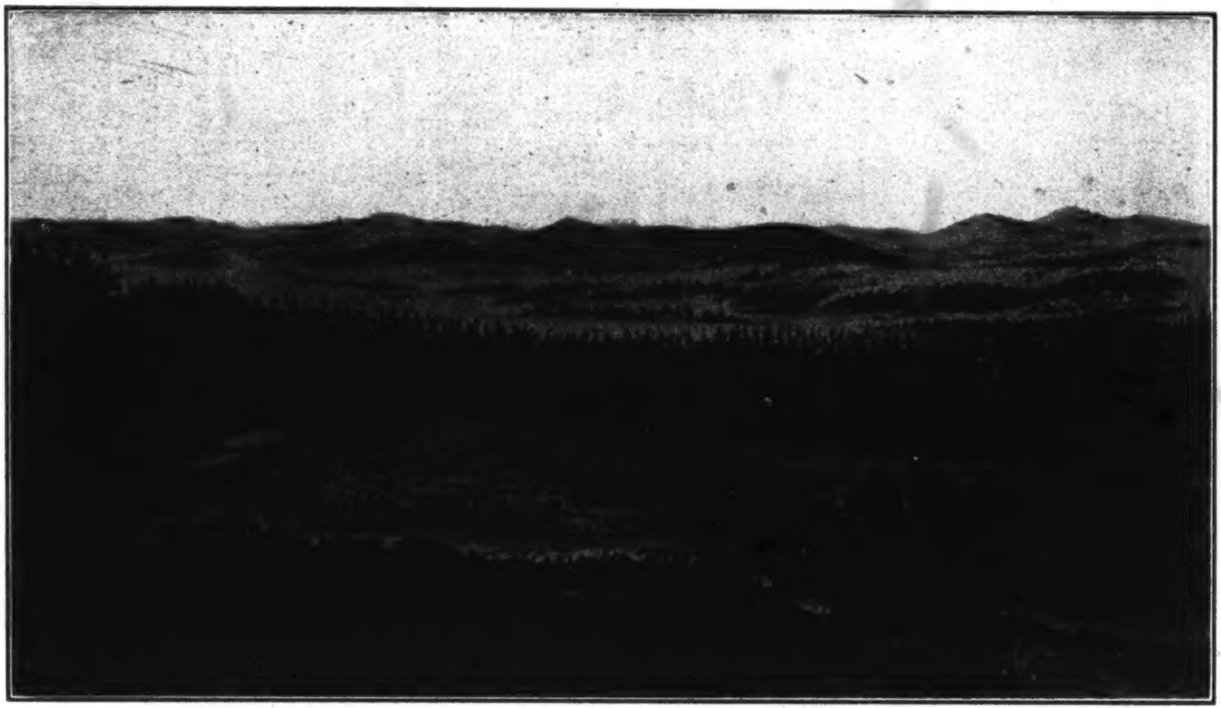
Sept. 16, 1911.

The First Jocko Agency

UP THE BLACKFOOT

UP THE BLACKFOOT runs one of the particularly interesting trails of western Montana. Longer than the oldest Indian can remember this trail was the highway of his people to the buffalo country on their annual hunting expeditions. Over this trail crept the war parties of the stealthy Blackfeet on their way to give battle to the Selish or to lie in ambush for the western Indians as they journeyed to the eastern hunting grounds to procure buffalo meat and hides for the winter. The mountains which overshadow this trail have resounded to the war cry of the savages as they hurled themselves upon their foe and have given back the answering shout of the attacked as they rallied for the defense. The loud chant of victory and the wail of mourning have echoed through the canyon walls, between which the trail makes its way. These same hills have, later, been invaded by the woodsman and the sound of the axe and the crash of falling trees have stirred the echoes to a different note. And now, before many weeks, the whistle of the locomotive will be heard where the cry of the savage warriors once disturbed the quiet. So swings the pendulum of time.

Moccasined feet first beat the trail "Up the Blackfoot." It was the connecting thoroughfare between the broad plains of the buffalo country and the sheltered valleys of the western slope. Eastward along its picturesque way went the Flatheads and the Nez Perces, the Kalispells and the Pend d'Oreilles after the bison of the prairies, which furnished them their food, clothing and shelter for the winter season. Westward they came, later, laden with the spoils of the chase if they had been successful or burdened with the weight of defeat if they had been outnumbered and outgeneraled in the almost inevitable conflict with the eastern foes. Nor was it always for war that the Blackfeet and the Crows came westward over this trail; sometimes they crept silently down its course, intent upon the theft of the Flatheads' horses. If these expeditions were successful, the canyon resounded to the patter of ponies' feet as the raiders returned, driving the stolen steeds ahead of them and losing no time in getting back to their own country. For the Flatheads were certain to



The Blackfoot Valley—From a Sketch Made for Stevens' Report, 1855.

pursue and more than once they fell upon and punished the marauders. Always there was something happening along this trail. Here were won the laurels of many a young brave and here were fought the battles which won chieftaincies for more than one bearer of the eagle's wing.

Lewis and Clark traveled this trail and in later years it was widened and the creaking wagon of the freighter and the lumbering stagecoach traversed its length. There are broad valleys along this trail and the invading farmer early found his way to their grass-covered slopes. Thousands of cattle fed upon the hills and countless sheep browsed up hill and down. Fences appeared and the whirr of the reaper became the autumn music in these vales. The main divide of the continent is the trail's crest; there are two crossings—one bears the names of the great explorers; the other is called Cadotte's pass. The western slope of the trail is abundantly watered by thousands of streams and by many beautiful lakes; its valleys are wonderfully fertile and its mountains are grand. The wealth of timber makes this one of the richest regions of Montana, supplementing the marvelous productivity of the valleys. It is a beautiful trail to travel and it possesses historical associations that add to the delight of the journey.

I have made a good many trips over this old trail. It was an old one when I first drove up the river, almost twenty years ago, but when I traveled it the other day, the changes made me feel like a pioneer as I looked back at what it was when I first saw it. It was in October that I made my first journey up the Blackfoot—October, nineteen years ago. Fred Sterling introduced me to this wonderful country and I shall never forget that drive. Mr. Sterling had a team in those days that I would rather ride behind than to travel in an automobile—that is, if somebody else was driving. Bay Star was a horse from the Raymond ranch; he could go more miles in a day than any other animal that ever looked through a bridle, and he could travel these miles quicker and come in fresher than anything else that ever stood on steel—anything except the "Allen mare" that was his driving mate. Star was a puller—he could trot up hill and down twenty miles with four men pulling on each rein and never break his stride. It required a man with Sterling's strength to drive him successfully. But when he was hitched beside the "Allen mare" he lost some of his impetuosity and became very much a gentleman; the team used to move like machinery. And it was this team that took me up the Blackfoot for the first time. The road from Bonner used to lead up the right side of the canyon, along the famous old Blue Slide. It was as treacherous a piece of road as ever was mapped. On that day a great rock slid down, loosened by the jar of our passage, and would have taken off a hind wheel had it not been for Sterling's quickness with the team. There had been a snowstorm in the upper country; when we got to the Stairs place, we traded our buggy for a sleigh and the way we hit the road the rest of route was breathless. It was a great ride. On the way back, we came upon a splendid bighorn buck, standing squarely in the middle of the road; the sheep looked at us and trotted out of the road; Sterling left me to watch and drove to Jeff Demmons' place to get a rifle. He came back with Jeff and the rifle, the sheep having obligingly waited within twenty yards of me. The return of the team didn't feaze the buck; he stood like a statue while Jeff got a rest on a small tree and fired at him. Jeff missed. What ensued were better left unsaid.

At that time there were a few ranches on Camas prairie; beyond, at Sunset and at Clearwater, there were centers of scattering farmers. Ovando and Helmville, beyond, were the business points for a country that was of older settlement and of longer cultivation. It was all a country of inviting richness, but there was nothing to it then, compared with what there is today. The Blackfoot country today is one of the most remarkable farming sections of western Montana. The railway which is pushing its way up the Blackfoot canyon to the Landing will push farther along before a great while, the possibilities beyond are too great to be resisted. There is no finer grain and grass land in the world than is found in this region; there are no valleys so splendidly watered as these; there are no meadows more fertile; there are no crops more abundant than those which are produced in these valleys that skirt the Blackfoot trail. And this country has at last been discovered. For a long time fortunes have been quietly made in the Blackfoot by the farmers, the cattlemen and the sheepgrowers. But there has been no booming. The country has just quietly come into its own; the settlers are many now.

One of the most historically important trips ever made over the Blackfoot trail, after the march of Lewis and Clark along its route, was that of Governor Stevens and Captain C. P. Higgins in 1855. This was immediately after Stevens had concluded his treaty with Chief Victor at Council Grove, just below Missoula. The parley with Victor had taken a longer time than was expected, and, as soon as it was concluded and the necessary formalities had been recognized, the treaty party resumed its march to Fort Benton, where it was expected a council would be held with the Blackfeet, a council whose object was to end the warfare with the tribes on the western slope of the mountains and to establish peace with the Crows, the Gros Ventres and other plains tribes. Governor Stevens expected, also to meet at Fort Benton Commissioner Cumming, who had been appointed from Washington to operate with him in securing this treaty. Victor and Alexander, with their braves, were to participate in this council and were to be parties to the new treaty, of which the one signed at Council Grove was but a preliminary.

Governor Stevens was anxious to reach Benton; if Cummings had traveled on scheduled time, he would be waiting for the governor and the latter knew enough about the bureau fellows in Washington to know that Cummings wouldn't stand for much waiting. Later events proved that Cummings had failed to follow instructions and had nearly been prevented from getting to Benton at all; it was Stevens who did the waiting. But when Victor and Alexander had signed the Hell Gate treaty, the governor felt the need of haste and he hurried.

Before the close of the Hell Gate council, Stevens' agents, Tappan and Craig, had arrived with the delegation of Nez Perces under Looking Glass, Spotted Eagle, Eagle-from-the-Light and others. It was agreed that the Nez Perces, with Victor and Alexander and their Flatheads and Pend d'Oreilles, accompanied by Agent Tom Adams and Interpreter Ben Kiser, should cross the mountains to the buffalo country and hunt on the plains south of the Missouri until the time came for holding the great peace council at Benton, of which they would be notified. The agents were to establish courier systems, to guard against all possible collisions with the Blackfeet and to get word to the Crows of the time of the council.

These arrangements concluded, Governor Stevens started his expedition on the march to Fort Benton. "For six miles," the record of the expedition says, "we crossed the broad, level valley here known as the Hell Gate ronde, and, passing the deep, dark portal of that name, six miles beyond it, we camped on the Hell Gate river. During the next five days and one hundred miles, the party traversed the broad plateau of the great mountain chain over a beautiful rolling country of wide, grassy valleys and gently-rolling prairies, interspersed with low, wooded hills and spurs, and well watered with clear, cold, rapid mountain streams. It was hard to realize that this beautiful and diversified prairie country was the top of the Rocky mountains, the backbone of the continent. At the second day's camp, the Indian hunter and guide, a Pend d'Oreille furnished by Alexander, brought in a fine string of mountain trout, and, not content with this, started out again and soon returned with an elk, and after this the messes were rarely out of game—elk, deer, antelope and mountain trout."

The trail followed the Missoula river and the Big Blackfoot, and it will be seen from this description that the country has not changed so very much in sixty years. The game yet lingers close to the valleys; it is a veritable hunters' paradise yet, though the settler has taken possession of the valley and cattle and sheep browse where elk and deer formerly found pasturage. It is a wonderfully beautiful country now as it was then.

Governor Stevens followed up the Blackfoot to the main divide and there crossed by the Lewis and Clark pass. The summit of the pass was reached an hour before sunset and the governor wrote an illumined description of the view which he beheld as he looked back over the plains that lay before him. He characterized the scene as a "magnificent and beautiful view, with the main chain stretching away to the north and the broad plains, broken by many streams and coulees, extending as far as the eye could reach, like an illimitable sea."

With Captain Higgins, his packmaster and lieutenant, Stevens agreed upon a routine which proved successful in getting the train over a good deal of country each day with comparatively little effort. It was the practice to start rather late in the morning—usually at 8 o'clock—and to move at a brisk pace without stopping at noon for rest or meal, making camp early in the afternoon. This afforded the animals plenty of time for feeding in the evening and morning, and made it possible to make a daily march of at least twenty miles, which was often increased to thirty or forty as occasion demanded. It was as fine a train as ever crossed the mountains and the record shows that there was never a sore-backed animal.

Of the handling of the train by Captain Higgins the record says: "As soon as an animal showed signs of needing rest, a fresh animal from the loose herd relieved the distressed one. The packers worked in couples, each pair caring for and handling ten mules. The riding animals were picked Indian horses. The mules were of large American stock. Thorough discipline and the best feeling prevailed among the party. There was scarcely a quarrel during the whole nine months that the expedition lasted. It was noticeable that, though hard-worked and only grass-fed, the animals actually improved in condition—a unique experience on the plains."

Over the Lewis and Clark pass, the train left the Blackfoot country behind. Yet they were just entering the real country of the Blackfeet. Back of them were the prairies, groves and streams of the wonderful plateau; before them were the vast, rolling plains—gray and arid, save for the mighty rivers which had their sources in the hills behind. Camping one night on the Dearborn river, one on the Sun and three on the Teton, the party covered 130 miles and reached the vicinity of Fort Benton on the fifth day, making camp on the Teton river, four miles from the post. The end of the Blackfoot trail was reached.

Sept. 23, 1911.

THE GREAT COUNCIL

THERE is a vast difference, even now, between the western slope of the main divide and the great, rolling plains which stretch away from the eastern side of the Rocky mountains. But, before the magic touch of the irrigator had transformed the browns and grays of the east side prairies to the bright green of the grain field, the contrast was greater and it is easy to understand how Governor Stevens, journeying over the Blackfoot trail from his council with Victor at Hell Gate, felt that he was in a new region as he crossed over the Lewis and Clark pass and moved toward Fort Benton for that other council which was destined to establish new relations between the tribes of Montana. On the west side, the numerous lakes and streams kept the meadows green long after the summer sun had cured the eastern grasses to their dull gray. Dense forests and innumerable groves of evergreen were here and there interspersed with the deciduous trees. It had been a veritable paradise. On the east side the country was rolling and broken with many coulees, but water-courses which, earlier in the season had been running streams were dry gulches or else contained but pools of stagnant water as the Stevens party found its way down the trail from the summit of the pass and out upon the plains. There were mighty rivers, but their banks were high and steep and their flow gave slight verdancy to the nearby growths.

Since that time, the waters of the streams along which Governor Stevens camped on his way from the summit to Fort Benton have been diverted by dams and canals until they spread over vast areas which they have reclaimed for purposes of agriculture. In places, the transformation of the country has been remarkable; it seems almost like uncanny magic. Dearborn, Sun and Teton rivers furnished the camping places for the party on its important mission. Here and there were meadows which provided the forage necessary for the maintenance of the train. That was all in the year 1855, when the expedition made its memorable march. Now these meadows have been extended; the benches, then dry and sparsely grassed, are now productive.

It is an interesting region which lies between the headwaters of the Big Blackfoot river and the turbid flood of the Missouri as it sweeps past Fort Benton. The advance of the tide of civilization has not changed it much in this respect. It was great buffalo country in those days; later, it became great cattle country and vast fortunes were made and lost by the men who engaged in the range industry; yet later, it was the scene of reclamation work—some of it genuine and some of it devoted to the enrichment of its promoters at the expense of some body else.

Dearborn has been the center of helpful reclamation work under the Cary act, which has resulted in much good. Sun river is now skirted by some of the finest farms in Montana. The Teton has been made to reclaim its own basin and even the benches which stretched at what once seemed an impractical height above the stream. There are interesting chapters connected with the history of these reclamation projects; they have not been perfected without some hard fighting. Some of these chapters will probably never be written; others of them have been told or will be told one of these days.

Some years ago, I had a pleasant trip up Sun river. As the road ran then from Great Falls, it skirted for some distance a ditch—then dry and grassgrown—which had played an important part in the early "reclamation" work of that region, work whose aim was to "reclaim" great areas of land from the public domain and to transfer it to the holdings of the cattle barons, through the medium of the operation of the then loosely constructed desert-land law.

This ditch, along which we drove that summer day, crossed places which must have been the camping ground of the Stevens party. It looked as if it were old enough to have been in use in 1855. It was so neglected and overgrown with weeds and grass that it seemed as if it had not carried water for more than a generation. It wasn't a very big ditch when it was new. It was even smaller then, choked as it was by the accumulations of several summers. It was easy to step across it anywhere.

Yet, some men whose names are prominent in Montana history had, in testimony given at a hearing in the general land office in Washington, testified that this ditch was so large that they had seen a boat sail through it. Their testimony won for them many broad acres of land. I knew of this testimony and I looked at the ditch.

"How did they do it?" I asked of my friend in the buckboard. "Was it just a plain lie or a varnished one?"

"It was well varnished," was the reply. "When they finished this ditch, they built an alleged boat and placed it in the trough where the water should have been. Then they hitched a team to the boat and dragged it along on the dry bottom of the ditch. There was never any Sun river water in the ditch; all the flow it ever had was from the water which drained into it in the spring. But that was the way they reclaimed land in those days."

However, Governor Stevens was not reclaiming land and was not building ditches. He was seeking to reclaim the savages from warfare and he went about it honestly. Had he been digging ditches, he would have done it on the square, for he was an honorable man and he dealt with the Indians on a fair-play basis. Otherwise, the history of Montana would be different from what it is. Governor Stevens dealt honorably with the Indians; the promises he made them were made to be kept. Until the civil war removed him from this field of labor and, eventually, from all earthly strife, he saw to it that the Indians were given all that had been promised them. How difficult this was, the Benton council showed.

When Governor Stevens left Hell Gate, he expected to find Alfred Cumming, superintendent of Indian agencies, waiting for him at Fort Benton. Mr. Cumming had been named as commissioner to act with Stevens in the council with the Blackfeet. General Palmer of Oregon, the third commissioner, had declined to take the risk of the trip across the mountains. Governor Stevens had impressed upon the authorities at Washington the necessity for having Cumming on time, as he was to bring the treaty supplies and the rations for the expedition. The government's promptness in this respect would have a good influence upon the Indians and the government had agreed to have Stevens' recommendations carried out to the letter. But Cumming was of the pompous, official type and did things his own way. He was so late getting up the river that his steamer could not get farther than old Fort Union; here the supplies were unloaded and were being towed up the stream by a force of men walking along the bank. All this Stevens learned when he had journeyed down the Missouri to meet his tardy associate.

It was a perplexing situation. Stevens' party was without food, having brought only enough rations for the trip, expecting to find Cumming's supply at Benton; the post traders had no stock of provisions, as their shipments had been delayed by Cumming's dilatory tactics; there were 2,000 western Indians in the Missouri valley, as delegates to the great council and the problem of keeping them out of trouble was grave. The Crows were to be dealt with and brought to the council. There were innumerable vexing conditions. And Cumming, opposed to the pacific policy of handling the Indians, despising the country, which he declared was not worth treating for, assuming the entire authority of the commission until Stevens showed him his place—he was the most difficult problem of all.

Governor Stevens impressed the men upon whom he could depend and organized a fleet messenger service which kept him in touch with the tribes. The Indians were assigned to camping grounds, as far south as the Musselshell river, where the western tribes had their main village. By constant communication, Stevens kept the Indians all in line. Hunting parties provided an abundance of meat and, though there was no flour, coffee or tea, the companions of the governor were loyal and sympathetic. It was a hard problem to cover all this ground by express messenger service; the men must be dependable as well physically able; the governor's 13-year-old son was impressed into this service, so trying did the situation become at times. The youngster made some remarkable rides.

So passed July and then August. Still the boats which should have come with Cumming, did not appear. The range was becoming poor and the hunting was not good. It became necessary for the Nez Perces to drift south to the Yellowstone. The Flatheads sent word that, if the council was not held in fourteen days, they also must go to new grounds. But there was no strife amongst the Indians; they observed strictly their agreement with Stevens and these long-time foes visited and hunted together.

Only once was there any threat of trouble. Four Pend d'Oreilles had come to Benton to see the governor. He told them to turn their horses out with his. When they sought their steeds, the animals were gone—stolen by Blackfeet. None of the Stevens horses had been taken. The governor immediately dispatched Little Dog, a Blood chief, to find the trail of the thieves, and sent his secretary, Doty, to the northern Blackfeet camps. Little Dog rode nearly 200 miles and did not find the trail. Doty rode 230 miles north into British territory, making better than 50 miles a day. On Bow river he struck a camp only two hours later than the arrival of the thieves. He called together the chiefs and demanded the stolen horses. Lame Bull, the head chief, returned three of the animals, but said that the thieves had escaped with the other. He offered two of his own horses in place of the one not recovered and expressed great regret at the incident. By this time Little Dog had overtaken Doty and to him the surrendered horses were turned, with instructions to take them back to Benton. Doty pushed on in pursuit of the thieves. On Elk river he found another camp of Blackfeet, where the chief, Bull's Head, immediately surrendered the horse and gave two others as amends for the misconduct of his young men. Sixteen days after the theft, Doty returned the horses to the Pend d'Oreilles at Benton and what promised to be a distressing incident served to strengthen the faith of the Indians in the word of the governor.

It was September 8 when the Nez Perces moved to the Yellowstone. It was two days later when the Flatheads sent word that they could not stay more than a fortnight longer. The couriers said that, unless the council were held in less then three weeks, there would not be a western Indian there. Cumming remained indifferent, even opposing the suggestions of Stevens as to the nature of the treaty which should be submitted to the council. He took no part in the strenuous efforts made to hold the Indians together, though it was his incompetence which had caused all the trouble.

The boats had not yet arrived. Stevens sent messengers down the river and found they had not yet reached the mouth of the Judith and would not be there before October 8. That was a hundred miles below Benton and 25 days would be required to tow the cargo that distance. The Indians were scattering and, though their friendliness continued, they were becoming restless. It was essential that the council be held at the earliest possible moment; it was the psychological time, when all the Indians were in the right mood.

To his agents and couriers, who had been told to assemble the Indians October 3, the governor confided a new plan and sent them scattering with the message. The council would be held at the mouth of the Judith, where the boats would be unloaded. All of the tribes were brought together, the entire western delegations attending and the Blackfeet sending selected parties with their chiefs. Had Cumming brought the supplies through on time, there would have been 12,000 Indians at the council; as it was there were 3,500.

In assembling the Indians at the new council place, some lively messenger work had been done. Hazard, the governor's 13-year-old son, rode 150 miles between 10 o'clock one morning and 3 o'clock the next afternoon. Doty rode 300 miles in quick time; Higgins went to the Yellowstone, 200 miles to the south; Tappan and Adams rode as far.

Three days were spent explaining to the chiefs the necessity for the change in the place of the council and on Wednesday, October 10, Governor Stevens went down to the mouth of the Judith. On the next day he reached the point where the boats were unloading, a mile below the Judith. He prepared the council ground and assigned the Indians to their respective grounds as they arrived. Cumming came down the river in a skiff and did not reach the Judith until Saturday. Monday, the last of the Indians had come and on Tuesday, October 16, the council was opened.

Vexatious though the delay had been, it had served thoroughly to acquaint the Indians with the purpose of the treaty and to give them an understanding of the attitude of all concerned. The Crows were the only one of the tribes summoned, not represented. The Snakes had been compelled to return to their home, but were counted upon to support the treaty. In the council were the Bloods, Blackfeet, Piegans, Gros Ventres—

eastern tribes — and Nez Perces, Flatheads, Kootenais, Pend d'Oreilles—western.

Two days only were required to reach an understanding as to the treaty. The governor referred to the fact that all the tribes were at peace with the white man and he wanted them to be friendly, each with the others. There was no dispute except as to the zone in which the Flatheads and Pend d'Oreilles should be permitted to hunt buffalo. The Blackfeet wanted them to go south into the Yellowstone country; the Pend d'Oreilles wanted to hunt in the Missouri valley, as it was closer to their pass over the mountains. The Blackfeet finally agreed and the treaty was signed. October 18, 19 and 20, the days following the signing of the treaty, were devoted to the distribution of presents, to feasting and rejoicing. They fraternized pleasantly and all agreed, though the Crows were not represented, there would be no attack made upon them by any of the treaty tribes.

The treaty was signed in time to establish peaceful conditions in the great central valleys of Montana before the arrival of the immigrants who came in the early sixties. It insured for the immigrants immunity from the outrages which had characterized the settlement of the Sioux country and the far southwest. It was a timely treaty and it was well kept by the Indians.

There were many pleasant incidents connected with the council. In fact, almost the only disagreeable feature of the session was the presence of Cumming and his persistent opposition. He held aloof from Stevens and the others, even socially. When the council sessions closed he withdrew to his own tent and did not join in the evenings of feasting and story-telling which were so pleasat for the others. But the governor had a good time and took no pains to conceal the fact.

As the office tent, the Indians had erected an unusually large lodge of buffalo skins and here, when the work of the evening was over Governor Stevens would assemble the men of his party, a few chiefs and some of the interpreters; there would follow what the governor termed "a regular Homeric feast" of buffalo ribs, flapjacks and melted sugar, and hot coffee. The whole side of a buffalo, well roasted, would be brought in and each member of the party would cut off a rib for himself. These dainties were about three feet long, but there was no discount to the zest with which the sweet meat was separated from the bones. There were stories by the interpreters and guides and the sessions usually lasted till midnight.

The treaty was more than a mere peace agreement; it contained special agreements between the Blackfeet and the government, similar to those which had been made with the western tribes in separate councils. The Blackfeet were to have a reservation, were to be paid annuities to the amount of $50,000;

were to have an agent and schools. The whole country between the Missouri and the Yellowstone was to be common hunting ground. The senate ratified the treaty the next winter and in April, 1856, it was proclaimed by the president. The tribes represented were: Blackfeet nation, 11,500; Nez Perces, 2,500; Flathead nation, 2,000.

The credit for the amicable agreement is due to the tireless efforts of Governor Stevens. He won despite the passive and active opposition of Superintendent Cumming, who was a fair specimen of the old-time bureaucrat. It required great tact, a thorough knowledge of the Indians and a spirit of fair play. Governor Stevens had made a preliminary trip in 1853 to prepare the Indians for this event. He had told them only the truth; they had checked him up and had found him absolutely correct. When he came back for the final council, they trusted him. The Judith council was not as difficult as was that on the Hell Gate save for the delay caused by the indifference and the incompetence of the governor's associate. Its results were far-reaching. It was one of the great contributing factors in the building of the state. It made it possible for whites to come in and not be disturbed.

September 30, 1911.

PEARSON'S GREAT RIDE

THE Indians were great highway engineers. The mountain passes over which they made their journeys and the river routes which they adopted for their passage through the valleys were afterward accepted by the trappers and traders as the most convenient course for their movements. This was natural enough. The trappers had practically the same impedimenta that the Indians carried; the Indian trail was just what they wanted. The packers followed and their trains moved along the paths which the Indians had blazed and which the trappers had beaten deeper. With the exception of here and there a difficult mountain crossing, these trails served the purposes of the freighters when the heavy wagon succeeded the packhorse as a means of transportation. When, yet later, the government's engineers came to survey routes for the highways which had been established by congress, they sought in vain for a better place somewhere than the ones which the Indians in the experience of long travel had selected. Nor were the railway surveyors able to improve upon this selection; the lines of steel which now span the continent stretch along the lines of the old Indian travel of generations ago.

So it is that two great railways have lines over the Coeur d'Alene pass which was the route of the Mullan road built by the government, which in turn had followed the path of the old Walla Walla packers, who had taken the course which Nez Perce and Coeur d'Alene warriors and hunters had traversed for untold years. This was the summer trail, only, in the days of Indian travel and the packers used to make their spring trips and their late fall pilgrimages by way of the Pend d'Oreille, preferring to risk the perils of the Lightning creek crossing to the dangers of the deep snows on the Bitter Root mountains at the Coeur d'Alene pass. But the railways have to fight the snow all winter; they cannot take the alternative course which the earlier transportation outfits could choose. And the railways have learned with the hard knocks of experience that it is no child's play to combat the snows of these hills when they are good and deep—and they are that almost every winter. The precipitation is great upon these summits; the moisture-laden winds from the Pacific here encounter the high, cold barrier which robs them of their burden and sends them speeding eastward, dry and crisp.

It was a long time before the Northern Pacific's line over this pass settled into anything like permanency; there were years after the road opened, when it was a question in winter and spring whether trains would get through or not. The improvement of the rotary plow has made it possible to keep the track open now and there is little delay from this source and most of the movable scenery has slid down upon the track and been shoveled off down the banks below, so that the danger from this source has passed, as well. The Milwaukee has had an experience somewhat similar, though the extreme danger was avoided by the construction of the long St. Paul tunnel. However, there is considerable portable scenery along this road which possesses the tendency to slip down and this was annoying at first; the disagreeable tendency has been largely overcome since the start. So, also, at first, the Milwaukee had snowslides to bother the even tenor of operation; but these have been governed and subdued to a fine system of control which amounts practically to the subjugation of the fierce old pass.

In the early days of railway transportation over this pass, there were a good many interesting experiences. The rotary snowplow was then comparatively a new institution and had not been acclimated to the altitude of the Bitter Roots. It was used to bucking the Dakota drifts on the plains, but it was a long time before it got accustomed to cutting around the curves on the 4 per cent grade. One day—S. G. Ramsey was division superintendent then—the rotary was coming east from Wallace and had got successfully over the hill. Coming into the Saltese yard, the rotary left the rails at the old west switch and was shoved along through the snow, which was about 17 feet deep at that point, until it struck the west end of the station platform, more than 10 feet away from the track. For several years the scars which the rotary blades inflicted upon the planking of the station were visible. That was the year when the pole props were placed under the overhang roof of the Saltese station platform; the weight of snow was so great that the roof threatened to collapse. The snow level was even with the sills of the second-story windows in the station and the people on the street behind the station had to tunnel through the great bank—there were no drifts; it was all level—to get to the railway. The snow doesn't seem to get so deep in later years.

Joe Sawhill and Joe Bradley were conductors on the line then. They used to start out in the winter, expecting to be gone anywhere from two days to two weeks. Their way cars were equipped with scores of shovels and picks; when a train got stuck, passengers were expected to help shovel. It was more or less primitive, but it was interesting, especially as there was always a big chest in the car, filled with bread and boiled ham and coffee. Once, I remember, the chest was exhausted and the snow looked deeper and more impenetrable than ever. We were between Saltese and DeBorgia and we were also mighty hungry. Two of us struggled through the snow to the section house at DeBorgia, expecting to find supplies there. But the family had left and all we could find when we searched the house was soda crackers and big onions. We took it all and that was what we had to eat for 17 hours. It was hard railroading, but it served to emphasize the realization of the difficulties which used to attend the crossing with a pack train.

There have been some perilous crossings of this old pass. One of the best couriers that ever rode a horse was W. H. Pearson, the express rider whose wonderful endurance and courage saved the Stevens expedition in 1855, after the treaties had been signed with the western Indians and with the different Blackfeet tribes. All through the expedition Pearson had served the governor, keeping him in touch with affairs at Olympia. Two of his rides across the Bitter Root were the most interesting of all the incidents connected with the crossing of the Bitter Root mountains. One of these crossings was in the early weeks of an exceptionally snowy winter. The other was made in such quick time that its story is almost incredible, but it is vouched for by the official records of the expedition. The midwinter crossing of Governor Stevens and his party is one of the most interesting incidents in the history of western Montana.

About the region which is contiguous to the Coeur d'Alene pass there has been thrilling history written. Fire and flood have contributed to the material of this history; disaster and destruction have held sway here; the pluck and perseverance of the people have furnished an example which might well be followed by the talking boosters who hold the floor in some other communities. Grand is the scenery here; marvelous is the beauty of the hills; sweet is the music of the streams; glorious is the promise for the future in the mineral wealth which is hidden here. But the hills are seared and scarred with the marks of the conflict between man and the elements. Blackened are some of the slopes; others are swept bare. Yet kindly Mother Nature is hastening to cover the wounds and to protect the avalanche-swept hillsides; there are new forests springing up and the spirit of progress which moves the people of this region is in emulation of the dauntless courage of nature.

It is an interesting trail to follow, even now, when the hand of man has transformed it from its old appearance; but it must have been a wonderful place when Pearson rode across it, accompanied only by an Indian guide, to deliver the news of the west side to the governor who was in council on the Missouri. It is not a difficult matter to picture its appearance then, if it is seen now in midwinter, for the great depth of snow which falls here obliterates almost entirely the landmarks which man has established and restores the summit to its primeval condition. Save for the thin, dark line which the railway makes, there is nothing here in midwinter to indicate that there has been an invasion of this mountain wilderness by man. It is weirdly beautiful and it is so silent that the stillness rings.—But the story of Pearson; that's the thing.

W. H. Pearson was his name. He was one of the many men whose deeds contributed immeasureably to the peaceful conquest of the northwest—deeds which outshine many of those that have been blazoned upon the scroll of history and have been immortalized in song. But these have received scant mention—unless the head of the enterprise in which they were performed was, like Stevens, a gentleman and an appreciative one, they have not been mentioned at all.

Pearson, the express rider, was a native of Philadelphia. He is described as small but well-knit, with muscles of steel and with spirit and endurance that no exertion apparently could break down; he had waving chestnut hair, a fair high forehead, a refined and pleasant face and the manners and voice of a gentleman. It is a long way from that description to the picture of the lank, uncouth, buccaneering fellow who is popularly portrayed as the successful pioneer and trailblazer, but this man rendered to Stevens and to Montana services which were invaluable in character and incredible in extent. Here is the tribute which Stevens pays to him in the official report of the expedition:

"Hardy, bold, intelligent and resolute, having a great diversity of experience, which had made him acquainted with the relations between Indians and white men from the borders of Texas to the 49th parallel, and which enabled him to know best how to move, whether under the southern tropics or the winter snows of the north, I suppose there has scarcely ever been any man in the service of the government who excelled Pearson as an expressman."

Pearson was still young when he joined the Stevens expedition; he was but 35 years old; but he had seen service as a Texas ranger, as a scout, as an Indian fighter and as an express rider, when he applied to the governor for a place on the roster of the expedition of 1855. He knew the frontier from the Rio to the Columbia and across to the Missouri—knew it not superficially, but knew it well.

Pearson accompanied the expedition as far as the Walla Walla council. As soon as that council's treaty had been signed, the rider was sent back to Olympia with the records and the news and was bidden to bring back whatever there was at the capital which concerned the governor. He had rejoined the governor at Hell Gate and had waited there for the conclusion of the treaty with Alexander and Victor. This done, he turned his horse westward again and galloped off toward Olympia. This was July 18, 1855.

It was August 27 when he reported next to the governor, who was then waiting at Fort Benton; Pearson this time brought news that the western country was quiet, that gold had been discovered on the Columbia and that the miners' stampede to Colville was the only unusual condition. In the time between his departure from Hell Gate and his reporting to the governor at Benton, Pearson had ridden 1,750 miles. Of his performance, Governor Stevens said:

"Pearson rode 1,750 miles by the route he took from the Bitter Root valley to Olympia and back to Benton. His riding time was only 38 days. He was less than three days going from Fort Owen to Fort Benton, a distance by the route he traveled of some 250 miles, which he traveled without a change of animals, having no food but the berries of the country, except a little fish which he killed on Traveler's Rest creek of Lewis and Clark, the morning after he left Fort Owen, which served him for a single meal."

On his trips Pearson usually drove two extra horses ahead of him and when the one he was riding showed signs of fatigue he would change to one of the others. "He could ride anything that wore hair" and was expert with the rope. He always contrived to exchange his tired mounts for fresh animals when he reached a post or trading agency. Sometimes he traded with Indians. But he was sure, in some way, to have fresh horses most of the time. He rode relentlessly, insensible to fatigue, cold or hunger, speeding alone across plains and mountains. What a figure for heroic verse!

Resting from his trip, Pearson made another ride to Olympia. On the night of October 29, when the Stevens party had made camp on the bank of the Teton river, returning from the great council at the mouth of the Judith, Pearson returned. Supper was just over and the men were gathering around the campfires, when a lone horseman was discerned in the west, making his way slowly toward the camp. The approach was so different from the usual dash of Pearson that nobody supposed it was he and there was speculation as to the identity of the horseman. All were on the alert and there was genuine surprise when Pearson rode in, his horse so weary that it staggered and himself so exhausted that he had to be lifted from the saddle. It was the first time anybody had ever seen Pearson feazed. He was unable to stand and hardly able to speak, but his emaciated appearance, his wild and haggard face, told of fearful hardship and his friends waited eagerly for the news.

Pearson handed his dispatches to the governor and then the men devoted themselves to reviving him with food and warmth. Then he told his news—shocking news it was for the little party, alone on the plains and a thousand miles from home. The great tribes on the Columbia were on the warpath, disregarding their treaties, and the disaffection was spreading to the Nez Perces!

But it was the story of Pearson's ride which interested the men most, thrilling though the news was which he brought. He had run the gauntlet of the hostile tribes with the dispatches upon which depended the lives of the governor and his party. He had left The Dalles on his return trip, well mounted, and had ridden the first day to McKay's ranch on the Umatilla, where he had rested and had got breakfast for himself, the place being deserted. He had then roped a big horse in a band nearby and, after a hard struggle had saddled and mounted the animal when he was surprised by a band of Indians racing toward him in war-paint and crying "Kill the white man!" Pearson's horse was pitching, but took fright at the Indians and in an all-day race outstripped the reds. When night fell, Pearson pushed the horse for all it would stand, doubled on his trail and rode all night, crossing the Walla Walla above the usual ford.

He rested his horse a couple of hours and then rode to Red Wolf's camp, where he procured a fresh horse. The second day he rode to the Lapwai, where he rested a day and then started for the crossing of the Bitter Root with fresh horses and a young Nez Perce brave as a companion. To save time he took the direct Nez Perce trail to the Bitter Root Valley. That night a heavy snowstorm set in. A tree fell and struck the Indian senseless. Pearson was horrified; he feared the Nez Perces would think he had killed the Indian and would themselves go on the warpath. But the Indian was only stunned and soon revived. Three days the storm raged. When it ceased Pearson sent the Indian back with the horses and, packing his food and dispatches on his back, set out on some snowshoes that he had fashioned during the storm. Four days he struggled through the snow, which completely hid the trail, and he reached Fort Owen almost dead from weariness and exposure.

At Fort Owen Pearson rested but for a few hours. The friendly Flatheads furnished him with a new horse and equipment and he took the saddle once more, worn and weary though he was. Down the Bitter Root, up the Hell Gate and the Blackfoot he rode, and over the pass to the Dearborn; then to Sun river and over the rolling benches of the Teton, where he found the governor, three days after leaving Fort Owen. It was a terrible trip.

The dispatches told Stevens, in detail, of the Indian uprising and urged him to go down the Missouri and to return to Olympia by way of the isthmus. Stevens reached his decision with characteristic promptness. He said he would go back the direct way and would move quickly. A messenger was sent back to Benton for additional arms and ammunition and plans were made for forced marches. At Fort Owen he bought more mules and replenished his supplies. Then he moved back down the Bitter Root to Hell Gate. He knew that the hostiles were waiting to waylay him on the Pend d'Oreille trail; he kept his plans to himself, but when he reached the fork of the trail he turned toward the Coeur d'Alene pass, though it was deep in snow. The men entered into the spirit of the dash and the crossing through the snow was made with incredible promptness. Stevens surprised his friend and foe alike by appearing at the Coeur d'Alene mission. From there, the snow was gone, it was possible to move rapidly and the Coeur d'Alenes and Nez Perces were held in line by the very dash of the governor's movements. He succeeded eventually in restoring peace with the other tribes before the war reached a serious stage. And all this was made possible by the great rides of Pearson.

Oct. 7, 1911.

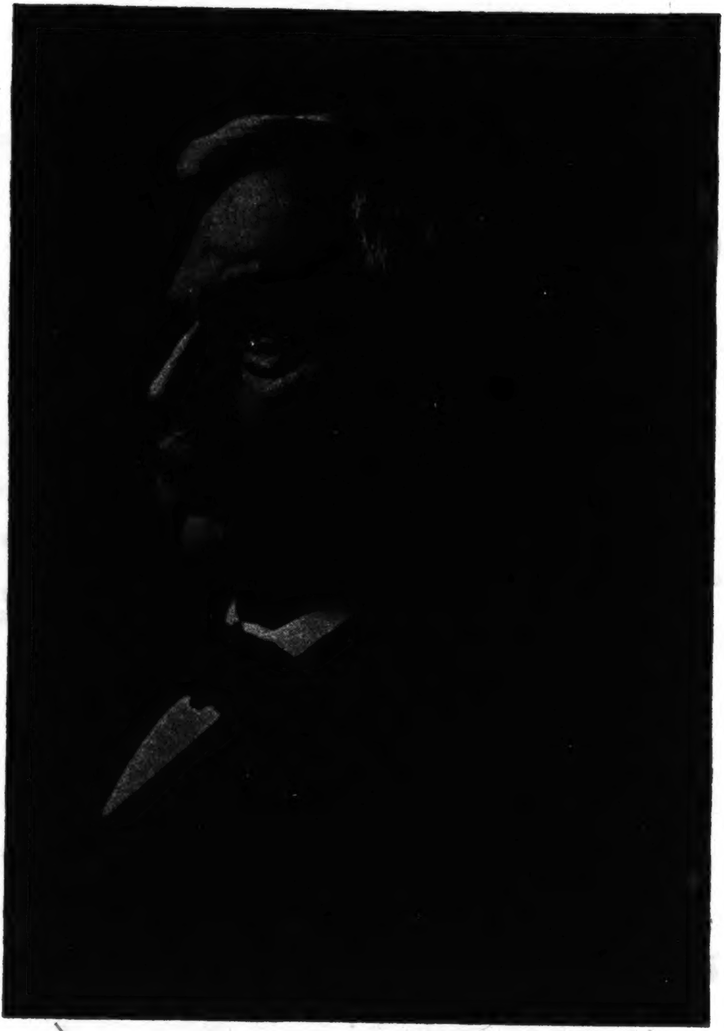
A QUICK DESCENT

FIFTY-FIVE years ago this week, a young North Carolinan was trudging down the Bitter Root valley, swinging a whip over a four-yoke bull team and heading for the Hell Gate river—unknown to him as the Nile but to which he had contracted to pilot that team of plodding steers. October 15, 1856, just 55 years ago it will be on Sunday, this young man and his party reached their destination. The tar was so well worn from the heels of this North Carolina boy that when he reached the Hell Gate ronde, he stayed there and ever since it has been his home.

And thus it happens that the Sunday upon which this story will be printed is the anniversary of the arrival in the Missoula valley of the man who is the oldest white citizen of Montana in point of length of residence, a citizen who is honored by his fellows and respected by all, Judge Frank H. Woody, of Missoula.

I esteem it an unusual privilege that I have been admitted to some degree of intimacy with Judge Woody. In the visits we have had together during the 20 years that we have been friends, he has given me the clearest idea I have ever obtained from anybody of the conditions and the customs of Montana's early days. But more than that, the pleasant association which I have had with Judge Woody has given me a good insight into the sturdiness of the men who made Montana; it has implanted in me a wholesome respect for the effort which they made and for the hardships which they passed through to build this state for us who came later.

It is not that Judge Woody has preached or has ever complained. I have never heard from him any story which was not happily told and in which the humorous side of the situation was not given at least all the prominence which it deserved. His word-pictures are always painted in bright colors, but they are portrayed in such accurate detail that they afford the listener the opportunity to see for himself the incidents which they depict. It is, therefore, rather from the study of these details that I have formed my impressions than from any appeal which the judge ever made for sympathy for the pioneer or from any



Judge Woody

gallery play which he might have made for applause—for he has never done one or the other.

The strongest appeal which can be made is the presentation of conditions so graphically that the listener forms his own conclusions—or, at least, thinks he does—from the story which is told. Judge Woody is one of the best story-tellers that ever lived. He possesses a remarkable memory for details and when he has recited an incident of early Montana days, it makes the hearer so thoroughly familiar with what happened that he feels himself so well qualified for the pioneer class that he is likely to apply for membership in the Montana oldtimer society; before he escapes from the spell, he is apt to imagine that he, himself, was here before 1865.

It would be a great thing for Montana if Judge Woody would tear himself away from the consideration of water-right litigation and forget his law library, devoting himself for awhile to the preservation in black and white of the recollections which he has of the days when Montana was young. I know of no other man who is so well qualified to present accurately and in detail incidents which, otherwise, will be lost. And Montana can hardly afford to lose these stories.

I sat in Judge Woody's office the other afternoon and asked him if there was any detail which he wished to add to the story which he had already told me of his arrival in Montana. I told him of my purpose to make his story the subject of this week's Old Trail contribution and gave him the chance to illumine it further if he wished.

"I guess not," he answered with a laugh. "I never think of coming over the Big Hole pass on that trip that I do not recall just how fast we came down that hill. I don't know as I ever told you how fast we came but I don't know as I could tell you if I tried. I never traveled so fast before down any hill and I know I never have since. There was just a streak of wagons and oxen in an atmosphere of dust and profanity. It was a regular toboggan slide and we slid it. That is the one feature of that crossing of the divide into the Bitter Root that I see first whenever the thought of the trip comes to me. I think the record we made that day for speed on a mountain road will never be equaled, I don't want to be on the trip if it is."

It was about sixteen years ago that Judge Woody first told me the story of how he came to Montana. We were driving up the Bitter Root, headed for the Big Hole country, following the trail over which the judge had come in 1856. He had not been over that portion of it since the first time he traveled it and he was alert for landmarks. As we jogged along over the road, he told me the tale. Shortly afterward, I wrote it and laid it away. This anniversary seems to me to be a good time to call the story out of the drawer where it has been folded so long. It is an interesting chapter in Montana history.

In 1855 the Kansas fever raged along the Atlantic coast. Judge Woody was a boy then but he caught the fever and started west from North Carolina. He reached Leavenworth in the spring of that year and looked about. The lure of the west by this time had a strong hold upon him and he looked out for a chance to get further from the states. A job as muleskinner presented itself which would have taken him to eastern Montana, but he didn't like the look of the army mules. So he waited and the next chance was offered by a Mormon outfit that was starting for Salt Lake. The young man accepted this chance and headed for Zion.

Salt Lake was reached in August. But Woody didn't get there with the outfit. He participated in a mutiny against a drunken and abusive wagon boss and left the train with eight other young fellows. They made their way to Salt Lake by a roundabout route and wintered in Utah. During that autumn and winter, the future Montanan had tough experiences; he was without funds and he was not a Mormon, which was a bad situation for a youngster in Utah in those days. He worked at making adobe bricks, he found some employment as a farm hand and he helped dig a big irrigating ditch. Once or twice he found it necessary to pose as a Mormon, but he was a good-enough actor to make the bluff work to the extent that he got food and shelter when both were badly needed. So passed the winter and the spring of 1856 found the young man well seasoned and ready for almost anything. He worked again in the farming districts and got a combination job as ditch digger and cook on an irrigating scheme. Here he worked until August, when he quit and went to Salt Lake with an order on the contractors for his pay.

"That order was what started me for Montana," said the judge. "I went to the office of Hooper & Williams to draw some of my money, when Captain Hooper stopped me and asked if I could drive oxen. If there was anything I had learned, it was driving oxen, on that trip across Kansas. I told the captain I could certainly drive oxen and he said there was a man in town who wanted to go to the Flathead country to trade with the Indians for horses; he wanted to take two ox-teams and he was looking for drivers. I didn't know where the Flathead country was, but I was willing to take a chance. I was anxious to get out of that God-forsaken country and I didn't care what the chance was that took me out.

"The result was that my chum and I contracted to take these ox-teams to the Hell Gate river, 600 miles or so, for $15 a month, and to start in two or three days. Our boss was a Mormon, named Van Etten. Hooper & Williams sent a three-team outfit along with our two teams. Both of our teams were oxen, four yokes each. The other outfit had two similar ox-teams and one mule-team. Early in September we headed north. Our route was along the lake and then up the Malade valley; then over Bannack mountain and down the river of the same name; across country to the Port Neuf river and north to the Snake river at Fort Hall. Then we followed the Snake until we could ford it, then over to Market lake and Medicine Lodge creek, where we struck an Indian trail which took us over the Rocky mountains and down to Red Rock creek.

"This brought us into what is now Montana. As nearly as I can remember, it was about the first of October that we struck this place and for the first time I saw our state—not formed then. The journey had been without mishap and we had made good time. Ahead of us loomed the mountains that marked the location of the Bitter Root and we turned across Horse Prairie to the Big Hole basin.

"Over the Big Hole country, we moved rapidly. It was a wonderful valley; we thought then, and I think so now. Such grass I had never seen before. The stock got fat, despite the pace at which we moved. And soon, one night found us at the very head of the Big Hole. We faced the steep pass of the continental divide. We camped there on Trail creek that night and pulled out early the next morning for the climb over the pass.

"That was the worst teaming we had on the trip. The streams—and there are a good many of them—have cut deep channels in the soft soil of the valley. It was terrible fording. I managed to upset my outfit and had a lively scene with the boss. But I got righted after a while and we struggled on out of the valley and up the hill. All day we pounded those steers up that hill; they pulled and heaved and strained, but it was night before we reached an open glade at the summit and I am sure the animals were as glad as we were when we made camp. It was a beautiful park and didn't seem, except for the chill air, as if we were on the top of the divide. We slept well that night.

"In the morning came the preparation for the descent on the Bitter Root side. We prospected the trail and found that we had two miles of straight-down trail ahead of us. There was no road—just an old Indian trail. One wagon outfit had been over the pass the year before, but it was lightly loaded and had made no road. Emanuel Martin—known as Old Manwell, the Spaniard, had taken three wagons over, we learned later, but it didn't help us much. We looked over the old Indian trail and followed that.

"The Indians were better road makers than most of the civil engineers; they didn't know much about grades and levels, but they had good sense in picking a route. Our trail ran a little to the east from the present road over the pass, but it was practically the same, and you know how steep it is now. It was just as steep then, only it hadn't been dug at all anywhere.

"We rough-locked the wagon wheels and took the two swing-yokes of oxen and hitched them behind, to pull back. With the leaders and wheelers in front and the swing-teams behind, we started down the hill, two men pounding the swing-teams over the heads to make them pull back; they just slid down the hill. And the dust they made! The yells and the snorts and the dust made a Bedlam. But we got to the bottom all right and were mighty thankful to find everybody there and everything right-side up. That was the hardest bit of traveling that I ever did.

"We straightened out and went down along the stream to Ross' Hole. There is a good road down the Bitter Root from there now, but there was none at all through the canyon then, and we had to make a detour over a small but steep mountain on the east side before we got into the Bitter Root proper. We did this, however, without accident, and entered the famous valley.

"The rest of the way was easy going. When we reached the mouth of Willow creek, just below the site of Corvallis, we found the first sign of white settlement. Here were the cabins of Lieutenant Mullan's camp of 1853. There were a couple of white men there then, herding some stock. At old Fort Owen we found a log stockade and a little group of cabins. Major Owen was away at Benton at the time, but there were three white men at the fort, Henri M. Chase being in charge. The journey from there to the Hell Gate river was without incident and we reached the end of our journey October 15. That was my first glimpse of the Missoula valley. Where Missoula now stands, there were that day 300 lodges of Indians, camped for trading with Owen when he should come back from Benton. I have been away from this valley for short periods at different times since then, but this place has ever since been my home and it is as good a place as I have ever found. There have been a good many changes here since then, but the picture of the valley as it looked to me that day is now as distinct as if it were only yesterday. And I have never since traveled as fast as I did that day coming down the Big Hole pass."

October 14, 1911.

THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW WAY

IT IS a significant fact in connection with the early history of Montana that the first permanent white settlers in this territory were not miners or hunters or traders. The first trail into Montana which had no back track was blazed by soldiers of the Cross. The first permanent white settlement in the territory which is now the state of Montana, was builded in the shadow of that Cross.

Across the state's map there are dotted lines which represent the routes followed by early explorers, by trappers and by treasure seekers, but they all double back toward the east. The first traveler, white of skin, who came this way to stay was Father DeSmet, who brought the Message of the Cross to the Indians of the Bitter Root valley. The first permanent settlement in this region was the mission founded by this good man.

With the miners and the farmers who built the early towns of Montana, came the preacher. Closely interwoven with the warp of the story of the quest for fortune in those early days is the woof of the record of the quest for souls. There are many deeds of daring which have been recorded in the story of those thrilling days which pale into insignificance beside the narrative of the self-sacrifice and the devotion of the early gospel messengers of Montana. There was no journey too long for them to undertake it if there was suffering to be relieved at the end of it. There was no exposure too great or too severe for their interest in the spiritual welfare of their fellows in the wilderness. There was no hardship so terrible as to cause them to turn back from an errand of mercy.

It is told of these early ministers that they never turned deaf ears to calls for their services. When sickness came or when death threatened in some of its more sudden and violent forms, the roughest blasphemer harked back to the days when at his mother's knee he had received the lessons which he had so long let go unheeded and he sought the consolation which could be afforded only by one of these good men of the frontier.

But not all of the settlers were scalawags. There were many pious men in the ranks of those who came from the east to carve a state out of the wilderness, and among these the clergyman who had sought this field found congenial comrades and helpful encouragement. There were churches built when towns were young. These soldiers of the Cross fought always upon the foremost skirmish line.

Thus it is that the intimate history of the state of Montana contains the names of DeSmet and Ravalli, of Comfort and Iliff, of Tuttle and Blanchard, of Torbet and Hough—men who ministered to the spiritual needs of the early Montanans, needs which were many and exacting. Thus it is that we find a preacher on the ground when Road Agent Slade is being executed for his bloody crimes and we find that Baptist preacher, at the request of Slade's wife, officiating at the funeral of that well-hanged desperado.

That these early ministers required great tact can be understood; that they possessed it is clearly demonstrated by the remarks which this preacher made at the funeral of Slade: "I have preached the Gospel for 30 years and have never in a funeral discourse been accustomed to refer to the life of the deceased. I shall not depart from that rule at this time."

It has been my good fortune to know some of the men who labored in this early field, where the harvest was so great and the reapers were so few. They were splendid men; they met with many discouragements; but they were brave and adaptable; they were true to their cause and they were fearless in their service. Most of them have passed to their reward—saintly men who earned their crowns by hard campaigning.

Some of them yet live and are continuing, either in this or other fields, the good work in which they were then engaged. They knew more of the real history of this region than anybody else; some of their experiences they could tell; others of their stories of human interest were locked by the seal of the confessional—whispered messages from lips fast chilling beneath the touch of the dark angel, or secrets murmured in hours of despair when encouragement could come only from the men of God.

These early preachers and priests practiced well; their precepts were made effective by their acts as well as by their words. They possessed the confidence of the rough-and-ready men who were the pioneers of this state. When they found listeners, they preached; but their most eloquent sermons were their deeds of mercy and their thoughtful ministrations. They required no lofty cathedral for their services! I believe no more earnest sermons were ever preached in the world than some of those delivered in the rude log cabins of the Montana frontier settlements. In the living room of a God-fearing family, perhaps, a handful of neighbors listened to the words of exhortation and encouragement; maybe it was in the hut of a miner that the words were spoken; not infrequently it was in the rough surroundings of a saloon or a gambling house, whose paraphernalia had been pushed to one side while the "sky pilot" had the floor.

But, everywhere and as soon as possible, these men built churches. These rude outposts of the army of the Lord were constructed ofttimes before any other permanent structure had been built. The church and its people played a not unimportant part in the building of this state. And to those who love this state it is always pleasant to hear of the work of these early preachers and it is specially a happy occasion when one of them is met in personal contact.

It is one of the pleasant incidents of the event which will bring, October 29, to Missoula so many of the men who have been foremost in advancing the work of a great church, that the dedication of the beautiful new building of the Missoula Methodists is to be the occasion of the return to this city of the man who built the first church in Missoula, Dr. Thomas Corwin Iliff.

Dr. Iliff will receive a cordial welcome in 1911, just as he did 40 years ago, when he came here to make his home for a season—the first pastor to call Missoula home. In 1871 there was no creed in the greeting which was extended to him—Methodists were joined by Catholics, by Baptists, by Presbyterians and by men who would have found it difficult to locate their belief. When he comes again, next week, his welcome will be the same universal, hearty salutation that warmed his heart when he took up his early work in this untrodden field. It will be the welcome of a whole city and some of the hands which will be extended to him will be those which grasped his in that early day.

It was in 1871 that Dr. Iliff came to Missoula to live. Aside from the Indian missions, there was no regularly organized parish church on the western slope of Montana. About six miles below Missoula—three-quarters of a mile the other side of the old town of Hell Gate—on the bench that overlooks the confluence of the Missoula and Bitter Root rivers, Father Grassi had built a little log church and he and Father Menetry had erected another at Frenchtown, but these were dependencies of St. Ignatius. There was no Protestant church at all and only these two little Catholic churches for the whites.

There had been one Methodist minister here before Dr. Iliff came. In 1869, Rev. George Comfort had visited Missoula, looking over the country and spying out the land. His, however, was but a temporary call and he continued his journey of exploration. Two years later came Dr. Iliff, then new in the ministry, but now known the world over for his effective accomplishments in his chosen work.

He was then a young man—26 years old—but he had had valuable experience. He had served in the Civil war as a private

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soldier from Ohio, his native state. He had received his collegiate degree and had been ordained a minister in 1870. In March, 1874, he had married. And in that same year he faced westward, in the Rocky mountains to take up his ministerial labors. This was the first experience of the earnest man, whose field has since broadened until it embraces the whole nation. To the nation he has endeared himself in later years, just as he did to the people of the little hamlet to which he came in 1871.

With earnestness which has been characteristic of his whole life, Dr. Iliff took up his work vigorously. As I have said, he found a cordial welcome here. Speedily he organized the First Methodist church society and immediately he started out to build a home for the church. So well did he labor that the new church was finished in September, 1872. On the 15th day of that month the building was dedicated. It occupied the site of the handsome new building which 1911 is to see consecrated to the use of the church.

Dr. Iliff was then, as he is now, one of the men who do not ask others to do what he is not willing to do himself. When he had prepared his subscription list to provide the fund for the new building, he gave $500 as his share. That was a large sum for a young minister. From the Church Extension society he obtained a loan of $500. The balance of the $2,300, which was the cost of the little building, was given by the people of the town.

There was no denominationalism, no sectarianism in the donations to this fund. The money came from all. It was July when the Iliffs came to Missoula. The old courthouse afforded a meeting place for the congregation which gathered about the earnest young preacher until winter made it impracticable to meet in the old barnlike place. In the audiences which faced Dr. Iliff in those days there were representatives of all sections of the country and there were adherents of all faiths. But they all admired the zealous preacher and they gloried in his spunk. If there was anything in their presence, they were willing to afford him that encouragement; they went to his meetings and they adopted him as a townsman. He became one of them, respected and trusted.

But the support of these people was more than mere lip-service. When Dr. Iliff told them that Missoula needed a church and that he proposed to have one right away, they applauded his determination and they dug down into their jeans for the wherewithal to build it.

The first class which Dr. Iliff assembled at the outset of his work numbered seven. He had a juvenile Sunday school whose enrollment was 20. From these small beginnings has come the Missoula Methodist church of today and, also, there has developed one of the great men of Methodism. In those small beginnings in the hamlet at the mouth of Hell Gate canyon, was laid the substantial foundation of the present-day developments.

Hardly had the young preacher got his bearings in the new field, when he took up the plans for the church building. He contributed vastly more than his own personal share of the funds, but he and his wife did this willingly and hopefully; from the church-extension people in the east, he coaxed the loan of $500—they didn't know much about the west then. Then he talked with his new neighbors and they responded according to their means—none of them as liberally as the preacher himself, but all of them in some fashion or another.

It was a year and two months from the time of the arrival of the Iliffs in Missoula to the date of the dedication of the little church. It had cost $2,300; the money had been donated with the exception of the $500 which was loaned by the extension society. It was a happy day for the young man when he was able to hold service in the church building, dedicated to the Lord. The courthouse had served, after a fashion, and the winter meetings which had been held in the pastor's home, had been an inspiration. But there was lacking the atmosphere of the sanctuary. This was provided by the new building.

In his letter to the local Methodists, accepting their invitation to participate in the approaching dedication ceremony, Dr. Iliff refers to the hearty co-operation which he received in those early days. "It was the day of small things, but of blessed memories," writes the venerable clergyman, "especially the great kindness of those dear oldtimers—Wordens, Higginses, Danas, McCormicks, Woodys, Blaines, Dickinsons and others."

And if Dr. Iliff has not forgotten them, be sure these oldtimers have not forgotten him. There are a good many of them yet left to greet him and to give the welcome which will come from the heart. The passing of the little, old, frame church—the pioneer House of God in Missoula—is regretted in that it has been the tie that binds the present to that eventful and happy past. But the spirit that was behind the erection of that modest little house of worship is exemplified again in the beautiful building which has taken its place upon the historic corner which it occupied.

It is pleasant to know that the good man who built that pioneer church is to be here for the dedication of its successor. It is good that there are so many of the laymen who wrought with him yet left to greet him when he comes back to his first parish home. His dauntless courage was the motive force behind that pioneer building movement and he builded better than he knew.

Missoula waits to welcome him. The autumn of his life has brought a bountiful harvest of results from the earnest effort of a lifetime and it is interesting to note that, after almost half a century, he is engaged in the good work of aiding in the construction of new churches in the west.

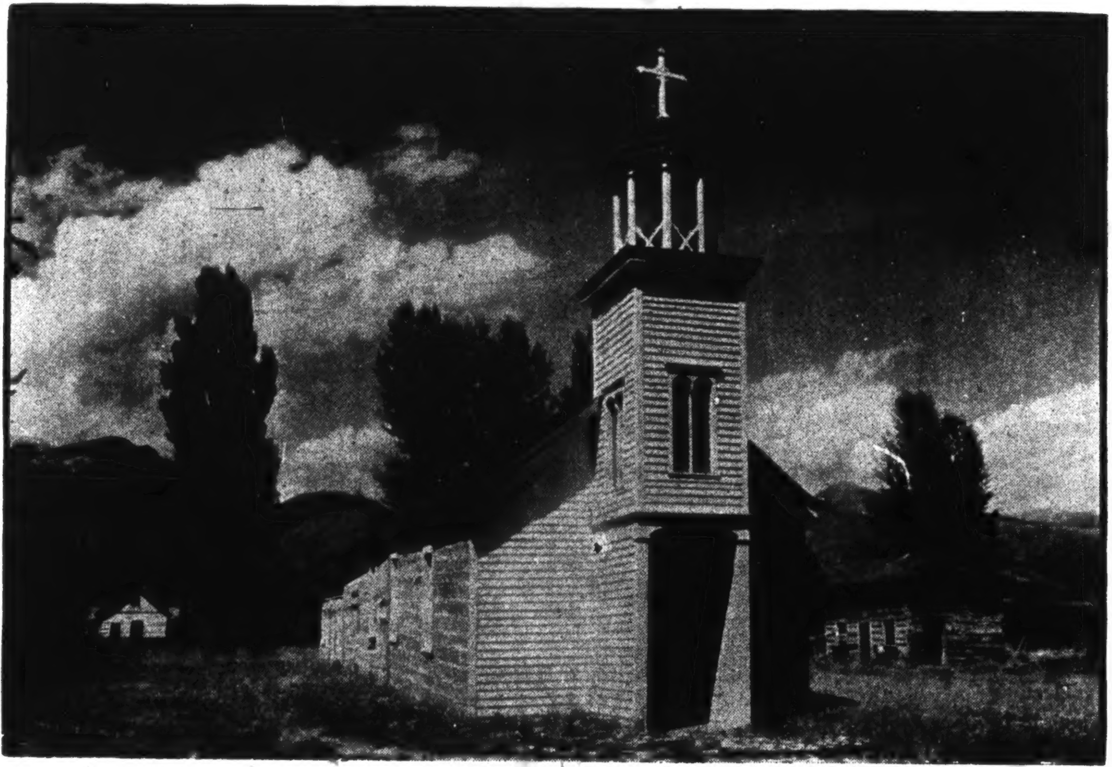
There is "Brother Van," also. "Brother Van" poses as a Methodist, but if ever there was a man in whom the broad spirit of the brotherhood of man was exemplified, he is that one. I don't want to discredit his Methodism a bit, but I do want to pay my little tribute to his worth as a man. He was the minister who reorganized the local Methodist church and who got it moving along on the lines which it has since followed—there had been a bit of a lapse after Dr. Iliff went to another charge, and "Brother Van" came here as pastor when the tide was at ebb. He put new life into the society and he infused his splendid personality into the members. He will be here unless there is a slip in plans, and his presence will shed sunshine through all the services. "Brother Van" is an everlasting ray of sunshine, himself. He is the impersonation of the practical religion that goes out into the byways and gathers in the lost sheep. There are hundreds of Montanans who can testify to the helpfulness of his minstrations; he is still working in this field. When the name of Rev. W. W. Van Orsdel is called, there will be new interest given to the dedicatory ceremonies.

October 21, 1911.

HELL GATE'S DEATH RATE

WHEN the afternoon sun illumines the entrance to Hell Gate canyon, the scene is remarkably beautiful. This canyon is one of the natural gateways through the mountains; its walls rise abruptly from the level floor, their lines softened by their covering of trees; all day these blankets of pine and fir and tamarack lie dark and somber upon their steep-pitched resting places; the dense green is almost black in the shadow of Mount Sentinel. But when the afternoon sun turns its searchlight into the canyon's opening, it reveals new beauties; new lines spring into sight; new details become visible and the green-black forest takes on a multitude of hues, blending beautifully into a perfect chromatic scheme. Beholding this transformation, the visitor in this scene wonders regarding the derivation of the forbidding name of this canyon entrance. In an earlier story I have told how the name originated; it was not the appearance of this gateway which suggested the appellation; it came from the bloody Indian history which was written there. But as the beholder gazes at the enrancingly beautiful scene which spreads before him as he looks into the canyon, he regrets that it does not bear a designation more in keeping with its rare beauty.

And so it is with the valley which derived its former name from this canyon entrance. Singularly beautiful is this basin, hemmed in by inspiring mountains, watered by charming streams and decked with great stretches of meadow and rolling prairie. "Hell Gate ronde," it was called by the early settlers, and it retained this name until the growth of Missoula forced a change in the nomenclature, giving a name not dissimilar in its derivation and original significance, but certainly more musical in sound. It is truly a beautiful valley which reaches from the canyon's mouth, where the waters of the Rattlesnake and the Missoula mingle, away to where the Bitter Root ripples along in the shadow of Lolo mountain and westward to where the blue waters of Nine Mile flow over their golden sands to add to the tide of the greater stream which runs on to the ocean. But this valley used to be known as the Hell Gate and that, also, was the



St. Mary's Mission —Photograph by Showel.

name which was borne by the first town builded upon its gentle slope.

Fair it is now—this valley—and fair it was to look upon when the white men first beheld it. Each of the early visitors to this region wrote eloquently of the charm of this basin. Each described its beauty, dwelling upon the loveliness of its streams, the grandeur of its mountain walls and the fertility of its fields. It was here that the Selish chiefs met in council with Governor Stevens; it was here that old Chief Victor stood and claimed the valley as the center of his tribal domain. Here camped the Selish tribes on their way eastward to the buffalo grounds—camped for barter and for rest. Here they camped on their way back, for recuperation if worsted and for celebration if victorious in their eastern sorties. It had been a favorite meeting place for the kindred tribes. It was the center of their hereditary domain. Unimpressionable we are wont to regard the Indian, but we find that he always chose his camping places where beauty of surroundings appeals to us now—and it must have appealed to him, unconsciously, perhaps, but strongly nevertheless.

But if there is much in the appearance of this valley that makes the name seem incongruous, there is much in the history of the old town of Hell Gate that makes it seem singularly appropriate, even as the Indian history of the old trail up the canyon made the name fit there. Hell Gate was founded as a white settlement in 1860. It retained its identity until 1865. During its existence its maximum population was 14—the average was 12—but in the months that it was doing business there were no less than nine men who died there with their boots on. For them, surely, it was the entrance to Hades, though the growl of Cerberus took the form of the bark of a Colt's army gun.

There is not much left to mark the site of the first town in this valley. Two or three of its buildings remain; they are outhouses now of a prosperous ranch. There is no trace of its single street. A guide is necessary to locate the buildings. Four mounds were there until a few years ago, which marked the resting places of the last of the victims of the righteous wrath of the Montana Vigilantes. But now even these have disappeared before the leveling influence of the wheat-farmer's plow. Unless you know the corner of the old rail fence in which they were planted, you cannot locate now the place where these offenders against pioneer law were hustled when they were cut down from their impromptu gallows.

It was in August, 1860, that Frank L. Worden and Christopher P. Higgins, partners under the firm name of Worden & Company, armed with a sutler's license to trade with the Indians, came from Walla Walla with a pack train bearing a stock of merchandise and established the town of Hell Gate. They had intended to locate near Fort Owen in the Bitter Root, but they found that the government was then engaged in establishing an agency at Jocko—the present reservation headquarters. They didn't like to go to either of the Indian headquarters for fear of losing the business of the other, so they settled upon the location at Hell Gate, midway between the two. And so the little town was started.

Judge Frank H. Woody, who had been in the employ of Worden at Walla Walla, came with the outfit from the coast and participated in the establishment of the town. The first store was opened in a tent. It was August and the tent was comfortable enough; but immediate preparations had to be made for the approaching winter and the partners began to skirmish about for logs for building material.

Prospecting about the country, they found David Pattee living with Captain Grant on what is now the county road, two miles west of Missoula's present location. Pattee had got out and hewed a set of cottonwood logs for building a house for himself. The logs were framed for a building 16 feet by 18 and they were bought on the spot, Pattee agreeing to deliver them at the place where was erected the first building in Hell Gate.

Pattee fulfilled the terms of his contract and Woody and a Frenchman—Narcisse Sanpar—erected the building, making the roof of poles covered with sods. That building yet stands near the county road to Frenchtown. It was the first store or trading post built within the present limits of the county of Missoula. In fact, it was the first mercantile establishment in western Montana, except the post at Fort Owen, near what is now Stevensville, and the old Hudson Bay company post, where Angus McDonald had headquarters on Post creek, six miles the other side of St. Ignatius mission.

When Hell Gate was founded, it was in the territory of Washington. Afterward, it was in Idaho; later, it was in the territory of Montana. It had a lively set of changes as to post-office address, but it remained stationary as to location.

This little log cabin was the only structure erected that year. In 1861, Worden & Company built another store and W. B. S. Higgins erected a building which was used as a residence. In the autumn of 1861, P. J. Bolte built a little house which he used as a saloon. In 1863 there was a blacksmith shop added to the collection of houses; Judge Woody thinks it was built by Henry Buckhouse; his is the only information which is available. In 1864, Woodward & Clements brought in a stock of merchandise and started an opposition store. That same summer J. P. Shockley built a house which was used as a boarding house. This constituted the entire architectural strength of the town of Hell Gate.

But, though the town was small, it was active. There was something doing there all the time. I have heard from Judge Woody and others of those who were of the Hell Gate population and from them I have learned a good many interesting incidents of the life in this pioneer town. There is good material for a "trail" story in the early merchandising experiences of these days. But this story will deal with the remarkable death rate of the town of Hell Gate.

It should not be inferred that the climate of Hell Gate ronde was not salubrious; there was no malaria in the air; there were no bacilli in the streams; there were no lurking germs to prey upon the pioneers. Death did not lurk in any of these insidious forms in Hell Gate. The dark angel's work was all done in the open.

Bolte's saloon, opened in 1861, didn't last very long. Bolte went out of business the following year. This furnishes reasonable evidence that John Barleycorn had comparatively little to do with the death rate which is the really remarkable feature of the history of Hell Gate. When Bolte closed his bar, there was no saloon in Hell Gate for more than a year. In 1863 a stranger came to town, giving the name of Cyrus Skinner. He bought a stock of booze and opened a saloon in the old Bolte building. His place became the loafing place of some tough-looking characters who followed him to the town and was never a popular resort. He kept his establishment going, however, until one dark night in January, 1864, when he went out of business suddenly and his going started the boom in Hell Gate's death rate.

On this dark night, aforesaid, the quiet of Hell Gate was disturbed by the sound of galloping hoofs. There was an arrival in town. It was a party which was made up of a delegation of Vigilantes from Virginia City. The arrival was unheralded, but the visitors lost no time in introducing themselves and in stating their business. When they had presented their credentials and had held a brief parley, Cyrus Skinner and two of his loitering companions, Alex Carter and Johnnie Cooper, were dangling from a pole which had been fastened into a log corral in the lower part of town. Continuing their rapid ride across the valley and up the trail into the Coriacan defile, the Vigilantes stopped at the O'Keeffe ranch and located Bob Zachery, who was brought to Hell Gate and hanged there alongside the others, Baron O'Keeffe having entered violent protests against an execution on his ranch. This was the last Vigilante execution in Montana.

A couple of months later, in March, Hell Gate's death rate received another boost. This time the affair was a home production. The Hell Gate people and the farmers in the valley had become alarmed by the actions of a couple of young Indians who were known to have killed a prospector named Ward in the canyon near where the town of Clinton now stands. They had become offensive and had attacked a Frenchman in the Coriacan defile. They were boldly insolent and were threatening an uprising of the reds. The settlers around Hell Gate dispatched Milton W. Tipton, a farmer living near Frenchtown, to Alder gulch with an appeal to the miners at Virginia City for assistance. The Indians soon learned of this move and it became their turn to be alarmed. They knew it meant trouble if the miners came down to fight. The chief of the Pend d'Oreilles was the father of the chief offender and, upon the demand of his people, he delivered his son to the Hell Gate people. The young Indian was brought in, tied and disgraced. The Hell Gate men led him to the pole which had served as gallows for the road agents and the old corral was once more decorated with a dangling human form. Hell Gate's death list had reached a total of five.

In the autumn of 1864, a man named Crow, who had been loafing about the village with no apparent means of support, was shot and killed by Matt Craft at the tent which was Craft's home, about a quarter of a mile above the Worden store. Craft claimed that Crow had come to the tent and had insulted Mrs. Craft. This statement was accepted. There were no officers of the law in the country and nothing was done to the shooter. The death list totaled six.

The visit of the Vigilantes had closed Hell Gate's saloon and it was not reopened until the fall of 1864, when William Cook stocked the old building with liquors and conducted a place which became a popular resort for men who were traveling back and forth between Fort Owen and Jocko. Everybody played poker in those days and there was almost always a game in progress at Cook's place. One afternoon two Irishmen had come to Cook's and had played cards until nearly dark. They became involved in a quarrel over the settlement of their game. A matter of $2.50 was the issue and they left the saloon wrangling about it.

There were no electric lights in Hell Gate. The illumination of the rough interior came from a big fireplace in one side of the room and from candles stuck about. On the night of the day that the Irishmen, McLaughlin and Doran, had quarreled over their cards, there were some of the Hell Gate men seated at a table in front of the fireplace, playing a friendly game, when the two returned—they were quarreling. That night added two more names to the list of Hell Gate's dead. One of the men who sat at the little table has told me this story of the spectacular events of that evening:

"We were playing at a little table near the fireplace, from which we got most of our light. We had also a candle on the table. Doran had walked over to our side of the room and stood with his back to the fire. McLaughlin, who had been an employe at the Jocko agency, was sitting on a whisky barrel, leaning against a brandy keg. He had evidently apprehended trouble, for he had borrowed a big navy pistol from Captain Higgins. He wore an old blue army overcoat and, though we didn't know it, had the gun in his lap under the cape of the coat.

"The men came into Cook's quarreling and they continued their argument. They were not talking very loud, but seemed very much in earnest. Standing in front of the fire, Doran reached for his hip under his coat, evidently to draw his pistol. McLaughlin leaped to his feet, exclaiming, 'I've a pistol as well as yez.' He threw back the cape of his coat. There were two flashes at the same instant. All the candles were extinguished and the close of the tragedy was enacted in the fitful light from the fireplace.

"At the table, we jumped up. The men were firing across the way to the front door and we couldn't get out that way. But we wanted mighty bad to get out. There was a thin board partition across the back of the room, separating Cook's living quarters from the saloon. Through this we dashed. I was in the lead. We upset a sheetiron stove which was in the living room; we scared Cook's halfbreed wife and her baby and they screamed; the discharge of the pistols sounded like artillery—it was the greatest confusion I ever knew.

"Reaching the back door, the others pressed so hard against me that I couldn't swing the door. While I was struggling with it, Cook came out and said 'I can open it. Go tell Captain Higgins I am shot.' I hurried to the store. Higgins returned with me and we met two men supporting Cook, who was hardly able to move. The shooting was all over. McLaughlin had fired but one shot. Doran had continued his bombardment until he was out of ammunition. He had fled and there was darkness and silence when we returned with our burden.

"Cook was laid upon the counter and an examination showed that a bullet had passed through his body, entering above the left hip and lodging right under the skin on the side. Captain Higgins used a razor to extract the bullet, but that was about all we could do. There was no doctor and no means of cleaning the wound. We placed poor Cook in his bed and he died Thursday. Everything we could do was done for him. Father Grassi came up from Frenchtown to see him, but said the shot had pierced the bowels and it was a hopeless case. Cook was buried near the little church which Father Grassi had built just below Hell Gate."

This made the death list eight. McLaughlin had died almost immediately; when found he had crawled to the back room in Cook's and was breathing his last. Doran fled across the river on the ice and made his way to Stevensville. There was a supposed justice of the peace there, Roop by name, and there was the mere form of a hearing before him. Despite the testimony of John Chatfield, who was one of the party playing cards in Cook's when the shooting occurred, Doran was released. He went over to Madison county then. Oldtimers report having seen him in Stevensville and Hamilton this summer. To one of them at least he mentioned his identity and referred to Hell Gate incidents.

The last chapter in the mortuary record of Hell Gate was written in the early spring of 1865, when J. P. Shockley deliberately shot himself with a pistol at his own home, which has been mentioned as the last house built in the town. His death made the total list number nine, which was a fairly good record for a town of 14 people in two years. There were no other deaths in the town. Its people were strong and healthy. Those of them who died, died quickly and without the preliminary of being sick.

There is, as far as I can find, no trace of the little burying ground of Hell Gate. There were five bodies placed in it—the victims of the Vigilantes having been buried in a field apart from the others. When I first visited the site of old Hell Gate and for a good many years after, there were mounds visible where the burials had been made. But time has worn these level and there is nothing left to show that the scythe slashed vigorously for a little while in the days when Hell Gate died with its boots on.

October 28, 1911.

EARLY DAY FARMING

IF WE could get the intimate story of the little things which the pioneers of Montana did—the story of their home lives—we would have the very best history of this state which could be written. If we could know of all the little troubles they had in getting their farms started; if we could get a picture of the difficulties which beset them every day, what a clear insight we would have into the tremendous task they accomplished. We would entertain a higher respect for the trailblazers, even, than that which we hold now. For it is the little things which count. A great opportunity is passing in Montana in the failure to obtain this intimate history while it is possible to get it. Soon the last of the pioneers will be laid at rest in his long sleep and, as he is placed in the narrow bed beneath the shadow of the grand old mountains which we all love so sincerely and which were the witnesses of his deeds long years ago, there will be buried with him the record of many things which we should know.

I have heard from the lips of these Montana pioneers tales which surpass in dramatic interest and thrilling detail any fiction that I have ever read. I have wished for the time in which to give them permanence—this in the absence of a more worthy chronicler and merely that they might be preserved in some definite form. In this series of Sunday stories in The Missoulian, under the collective heading, "Following Old Trails," I have sought to put into permanent form some of these stories as they have come to me in the course of a good many years of reportorial work among the men who made this state. In every corner of Montana, there is some man or woman who can contribute to the historical record of the state. If a systematic effort were made to collect these stories, Montana's history would be recorded in a fashion which would be of lasting benefit to the Montanans yet unborn and which would make Montana's record incomparably a valuable contribution to the record of the commonwealths of the Union.

We are accustomed to think of the Montanans of 1865 as miners only. We do not consider that, even then, there were men here who were farming. The story of Martin Barrett of Beaverhead county is interesting in that it gives a glimpse of the great difficulties which beset farming in those days. Also, it presents some little sidelights upon events of great importance; such illumination adds to our understanding of the movement of affairs in those stirring days. These are little details, which are mentioned as mere incidents to a story which has often been told, but which really add materially to our record of these greater events by the better understanding which they afford of the minutiae.

Martin Barrett was a lad of seven years in Ireland when the famine of 1847 brought desolation to the Emerald Isle. The father had completed preparations to bring his family to America, when he fell a victim to an accident which caused his death. The mother, however, went on with the plans and started with her nine sons for Canada. The voyage was made in a sailing vessel and consumed 30 days, during which two of the children died and were buried at sea. In this stern school was the lad prepared for the later hardships which he met and overcame so valiantly as a pioneer of the state which now honors him.

The family settled in Ontario, where a brother of the lad's dead father lived. There young Martin learned farming and was apprenticed to a currier. His trade learned, the boy went to St. Joseph in 1859 and, in the following year, made his first trip across the plains with an emigrant train bound for Salt Lake, earning his passage by driving an ox team. "When I got to Salt Lake," says Mr. Barrett in his story, "I found a tannery and asked the tanner for a job. He told me that, in the seven years he had been in business there, he had received only one silver dollar; he had taken all the rest of his pay in trade. As I was not a family man, I saw this was no place for me, and that was the last tannery I ever saw. I went back to St. Joseph."

In 1862 Barrett went to Colorado. He worked there that summer and made friends who were destined to become his lifelong companions and business associates. With one of them, Joe Shineberger, he decided to return home for the winter; the two to meet in St. Joseph the next spring and then to join the migration to the placer mines of the northwest, Salmon City being their objective point. This program was carried out. Barrett spent the winter in Ontario and was at St. Joseph in the following spring. Before the young gold-seekers reached the Idaho fields, the stampede to Bannack, Mont., swept them to one side and they came this way.

Eleven miles south of Bannack, the two young men located a ranch and built a little log cabin. Barrett was elected to manage the ranch and his partner went on to the mines. Shineberger worked at Bannack and Alder gulch for the first summers and spent the cold seasons on the ranch. Barrett did well by "ranching" freight cattle and horses, as he had good feed on his range and there were many of the freighters who were glad to have their stock cared for under these conditions.

"We had a red and white flag," says Mr. Barrett, telling of those early experiences, "which we used as a signal to call the men from the fields for dinner. In 1864 a party of patriotic emigrants saw this flag flying and at once held an indignation meeting over the 'secesh' flag—though I had no idea what they were fussing about. The emigrants reported the matter to Governor Edgerton in Bannack and he sent us word that we had better take down the old signal flag. I did this very willingly, as I had not had a thought of any offense to anybody's feelings. I was yet a Canadian and had no part in the local conflict."

Secluded as he was upon his ranch, Mr. Barrett was remote from the exciting incidents of the operations of the Vigilantes in 1865, but one day he got word from a friend that "Dutch John" was coming to the Prairie to take a big gray horse that the farmers owned. Shineberger and Barrett watched all night for the arrival of the bad man, but he didn't show up to get the gray horse, and in the morning they went out to find him. They tracked him to some willows on their meadow.

Telling of his dealings with this desperado, Barrett says: "I bought his bedding when we found him camped there, but I sold him an old mule, so that when we finished trading, he owed me $25. Dutch John went from there to Snake river, where he was arrested by the Vigilantes and sent back to Bannack under guard. This guard stopped at the ranch and while they were resting Dutch John told me that if I would go to Bannack he would pay me the $25 he owed me. It was cold winter—40 degrees below zero, the next day when I went up to Bannack to collect that bill. I found Dutch John hanging by his neck to the ridgepole of a carpenter shop, his body frozen stiff, and I called the deal off. In that same shop, there were two other bodies of hanged highwaymen which had been thrown aside to make room for the hanging of Dutch John—these lay on the bench and the floor, wherever there had been a chance to toss them. Henry Plummer's body was one of them—he had been the leader of the road agents and at the same time the sheriff of the county. He died like a coward, begging and promising anything."

Prices for farm products were good in those days when Mr. Barrett began to cut hay in Montana. In the winter of 1865 he made a contract with the stage company to deliver 100 tons of hay at Pine Buttes, a stage station near the divide. The haul was 50 miles and the price was to be $100 a ton. The winter, as has been said, was terribly cold, but the partners thought they would be able to make some profit out of the deal, and Shineberger started with the first loads, using ox teams. He didn't get back to the ranch as soon as he was expected and Barrett started out to see if anything had gone wrong. Up the trail several miles Shineberger was found with hands, feet and face frozen—he was not enthusiastic over the future of the hay-contract business and declared to Barrett: "If you want any more hay hauled, you'll haul it yourself."

Barrett, confident that he could make more satisfactory delivery of the hay, made the next trip. Starting early in the morning, he reached the stage station at Pine Buttes at midnight. It had taken hard driving and the thermometer showed a temperature of 50 degrees below zero. It was too cold to measure hay and, even at the price of $100 a ton, the stage people were willing to guess with Barrett at the weight of the loads. "It was a high price," says Mr. Barrett, commenting upon the deal, "but Bateman, who bought the hay, didn't lose anything on the trade, as he sold it for 25 cents a pound. I concluded, however, that I had had enough of hay-hauling in the winter. We didn't do anything more with that contract."

When the partners had become fairly established in their ranch business, Barrett painted a big sign, which was nailed to the cabin and which bore the legend: "Stock Bought and Sold Here." They thought it looked all right, but some waggish fellow—when nobody was looking—altered the lettering so that it read: "Stock Bought and Stole here." Fortunately the young men had established a reputation which stood the test of this joke and the sign was allowed to remain without bringing them trouble. It was one of the jokes of the trail until the weather blotted out the lettering.

Barrett started in the winter of 1866 on another visit to his mother, back in Canada. The high cost of stage transportation made that means of conveyance practically prohibitive for the young man and he decided to make the trip with one of his own teams. He got to Salt Lake all right, but was compelled to wait there until a wagon train could be formed, as it was dangerous for a small party to cross the plains alone. It was during this stay in Salt Lake that Barrett witnessed one of the anti-Gentile outbreaks; he was near enough to hear the shot that killed Dr. Robinson. The Mormons had the transients so frightened that it didn't take much time to get the train organized after this.

The trip home was made safely and in the spring of 1867. Barrett came back to Montana. He brought a span of brood mares and a wooden "tumbling" rake—probably the first one brought to Montana. Mr. Barrett says: "In the train from Omaha there was one lone girl. Girls were a scarce article in our country, and this was a specially fine girl. I thought I'd better cultivate her and take her in. I did—later. And this is the way the affair worked out: When we got to our ranch on the trail, I found my partner sitting in the doorway of the cabin, mending his clothes. He hadn't heard from me since I left the fall before and he had concluded that I was dead. When I spoke to him as I came up, he jumped and lost his needle—the only one he had. He asked me if I had brought back a wife. I told him I had not, but that I knew a mighty fine girl. 'Go and get her,' he said, 'as I have lost my needle.' 'All right,' I replied, and I went and got her."

With a woman on the ranch, a garden became a necessity, and that summer a fence was built around a little patch of ground about a hundred feet square. It was a novelty which attracted attention. It made some folks homesick and it made the family on the ranch feel quite at home. The ranch business prospered and has been prospering ever since. The log cabin was succeeded by a two-story brick house, the brick being made and burned on the ranch. The building of the brick house created even more excitement than the fencing of the little garden.

While the construction of the house was in progress, Mr. Barrett was summoned to serve on the grand jury in Bozeman. This placed him in a dilemma. His master mason and head carpenter were at swords' points—one was Irish and the other English, and it kept Barrett busy intervening in their disputes. It would never do to go to grand jury with these men on the place; they would have the new house in ruins. "In this predicament," says Mr. Barrett, "I went to Dillon, saw a doctor and explained to him my dilemma. He very kindly provided me with a disease and the medicines to match. I forwarded his certificate of illness and was permitted to remain at home, where I was needed more than I was in Bozeman."

Mr. Barrett, however, was not unmindful of the duty of a citizen to his state and he became a member of the territorial legislature in 1878. He was a member of the special session of the summer of 1879, at which the question of a Montana subsidy for the Northern Pacific railway was fought out so stubbornly and was ultimately defeated. Barrett was in the thick of this fight, bitterly opposed to the subsidy. The capital had been moved to Helena; and it was there that the legislature was in session. Barrett and enough of his associates to prevent a quorum, walked out of Helena one night to avert a vote on the question next morning, when the friends of the subsidy would probably have carried their point.

They walked to Ten Mile creek, where they were overtaken by the stage in the morning. Some of them, Barrett being one of the party, went on to Fort Benton in the stage and there succeeded in interesting W. G. Conrad in the fight. Mr. Conrad returned with them to Helena and jumped into the contest. The subsidy bill was beaten and it was the ten-day vacation which was enforced by this little band of absentees, which beat it. It was one of the most vital legislative battles in the state's history. The people of the then territory were much wrought up over it. Many of the men who had voted in the legislature for the subsidy were burned in effigy by their outraged constituents. Those of the Barrett party were banqueted and feted when they reached home.

These are just a few of the little sidelights which are found in the story of the life of this sturdy pioneer. Surely, they illumine some of the pages of Montana's history as the mere narration of the main points in the story could not do. That little story of Barrett's trip to Bannack to collect the $25 which Dutch John owed him—I think that is one of the best human interest tales that I have heard in a long time. To ride through a temperature of 40 degrees below zero to collect a balance due on the sale of a mule and then to run against the man who was to pay the bill, hanging by the neck, dead and frozen, that was something of an experience.

Barrett's story of how he was influenced to commit matrimony when he did isn't a bad sidelight, is it? Of course, he would have married the girl ultimately, for he had made up his mind to that on the long trip across the plains, and he is of the sort which, having made up its mind, doesn't turn aside from the performance of the plan. Also, Mrs. Barrett must have reached a similar conclusion previously, off hand. But that the marriage was hastened by the loss of the last needle at the bachelors' ranch—that is a good story, it seems to me.

I believe that it is these incidents which make up the most interesting part of our state history. That is why I am anxious that there should be a systematic effort made to secure the material for a thousand similar tales, before it is too late. The intimate history of the commonwealth of Montana is the history which we need to get. The salient points have been well enough taken care of; we have the chronology well arranged. But the little stories of the real life of the pioneer—they are what is needed to make complete Montana's story. The following of old trails is a pleasant task and it may be made useful to the state. I hope others will join in what has become to me a pastime, rather than a labor.

Nov. 4, 1911.

THE MAGINNIS GULCH STAMPEDE

IF A REPORT were to reach Missoula today that rich diggings had been found in Montana there would be a quickening of the pulses of the old fellows who, 40 years ago, responded to the call of many such reports, and they would forget the years which have intervened; they would shake off the stiffness of these years and would hit the trail for the new camp. A man never gets too old to feel the thrill which the news brings that new diggings have been found, if he has once experienced that thrill. It is more than the mere lure of gold; it is the call of the trail.

When the rich bars in Alaska were discovered, the men who rushed toward the Arctic circle were not all young. There were veterans of a good many of the Montana stampedes in the throng which journeyed to the land of the midnight sun. It was only the other day that Tom Irvine, one of the best-known of the early-day Montanans, came into my office and greeted me; he had been prospecting in the Alaska fields; he left Montana when the news came. And he was a type of thousands who responded to that same news. And as long as these old fellows can walk, they will line up for the march to new diggings.

There are men in Montana—good men, too—who have followed with pick and pan a good many of these reports, followed them each time with renewed hope and with the spring of youth in their footsteps, spurred by the inspiration of their belief that at last they were moving to the pot of gold at the rainbow's foot, moving forward only to find disappointment at the end of the journey, but always ready to undertake just such another journey when the call was repeated. There are other men in the ranks of Montana's pioneers who were more successful in their quest—they found the gold, for them the rainbow held its brightness and did not vanish into empty air before they reached the treasure which it pointed out.

But it is not the measure of success which attended their early quest which is the criterion of the interest which these men feel in the call as it comes again. On the march to new fields, the man who struck it rich touches elbows with the man who missed the pay streak; they are comrades in the new search; each of them is burning with the passion of the quest. So strong is this passion that it destroys judgment sometimes; there is not the inquiry which caution would prompt; it is just a case of getting there first and driving stakes.

It was in the winter of 1878 and 1879 that it was whispered in Missoula that rich diggings had been found in Maginnis gulch, west of the Flathead reservation, beyond Camas prairie. Martin Davis, who lived for a good many years on the Flynn ranch, below Missoula, after that, had been prospecting over beyond and on his return had seen what looked like good gravel; he had panned some of it and he had obtained a number of colors which grew every time the story was repeated. Davis had meant to keep it dark; winter was a poor time for a stampede and he didn't want any excitement.

But Davis told Jim Meininger and Meininger told somebody else and it was not long before Missoula was buzzing with the whispers of the men who were in the secret. Then it was no secret at all. It was a matter then of watching your neighbor to see that he didn't hit the trail before you did. Missoula wasn't very big then, but it was lively with distrust, what there was of it. No man believed his closest friend. There had to be a rollcall every morning before anybody would believe that somebody else had not stolen away in the night to get the first claim on Martin Davis' rich ground in Maginnis gulch.

This was the state of affairs in February, 1879, when some of the uneasy ones one morning made the discovery that the expected exodus had taken place and some of the townspeople were not accounted for when the daily census was taken. Billy Lyons was not to be found; Tom McNamara was not in his usual haunts; John Sheehan was missing and so were Dick Cunningham and about a dozen others. It was a clear case. They had hit the trail for Maginnis gulch.

Clarence Prescott was a young fellow then—he isn't so very old now. He had been in on the secret early in the game and he was as anxious as the next man to get stakes driven in that rich ground. He had talked the matter over with Meininger a good many times during the winter and they had plans made for a tolerably early start in the spring. But this new situation upset all these plans; a new lineup had to be made and it had to be made quickly. Prescott hunted up Meininger, who was also hunting him, and the new arrangements were speedily concluded. In the afternoon a little bunch of horsemen galloped out of town, headed westward toward the Coriacan defile, beyond which lay the reservation and the supposedly rich gravel of Maginnis gulch.

In all the world there are few trips as delightful as the ride from Missoula across the reservation to Camas prairie. Recently there have been many men who have made this discovery; some of us have known it for a good many years and have had the enjoyment of the beauties of the trip which these later discoverers have missed. But the grandeur of the mountains, the charm of the valleys, the delight of the streams—these, delightful though they are in the summer, lose their attractiveness when the breath of a February storm sweeps across the country. And it was straight into a February storm that the Argonauts rode as they galloped westward.

In the party were Clarence Prescott, Jim Meininger, Captain Townsend (afterward murdered in the Flathead country), Bill Chinn, Pat Mahoney, Joe Booth, Sam Mitchell and three or four others. They outfitted in a hurry, there was not any time to lose. Each man had his own saddle horse, but there was no packhorse in the outfit. At the back of each saddle, tied to the skirt, was a bundle of lunch; there was a little feed of oats for the horse, about 10 pounds of flour and a little coffee in each bundle. Some pieced this out with bacon while others took sardines. Nobody anticipated anything more than a winter picnic on the fifty-mile ride. Most of the men took whisky with them after the fashion of the day. Prescott, experienced in riding, packed three small flasks of imported brandy and kept them out of sight.

The calvacade reached Alex Morrigeau's place on the Jocko just before dark. There was a little, one-room cabin there, where the substantial farmhouse stands now. Morrigeau, even then, had a family of considerable size, but he took in the wanderers for the night. A blanket was hung up in front of the Morrigeau bed in one end of the cabin and the goldseekeers slept on the floor in the other end of the little room. The horses were under rude shelter outside. Thus was the first stage of the Maginnis gulch stampede. The rest of the experience is best told just as Colonel Prescott told it to me the other day when I asked him for this bit of western Montana history for these trail stories.

"We were just getting to sleep," said the colonel, "and this was not as easy a matter as you might think—when we were roused by the arrival of another party from Missoula. These fellows were in a sleigh. I remember that Billy Kennedy was one of them; Tom McManus was another and I think Charlie Winter was also in the sleigh. They were leading saddle horses, as they expected to have to race for the diggings when they got to the hills. They were going by way of the Little Bitter Root. There was no room for them in the cabin so they drove on through the night.

"Pat Mahoney and Joe Booth were wide awake at once. They thought it would not do to let the Kennedy party get so far ahead of us and they insisted that the thing for us to do was to push right along after them. So we got on the road again at 11 o'clock that night with an Indian to show us the way across the river at Antoine's ford.

"We rode hard all night and just before daylight we reached the river at the ford, which was to let us across to Camas prairie for the final dash for the mountains beyond where we expected to find gold. The Indian led us all right and we got across without much trouble. As day broke, we pulled up at the edge of Camas prairie and camped for breakfast.

"The weather was mild when we left Missoula. It was winter, all right, but there was no sign of a storm and we started, confident that good weather was a matter of course. The night ride had been rapid but not cold; we had moved too fast to get chilled and we were too intent upon getting to the diggings first to pay much attention to the weather, anyway.

"While we were at Antoine's ford, a little sifting snow began to fall. Those of us who knew the country, knew that the storm was starting in a fashion that was not encouraging. While we were at breakfast on the east edge of Camas, the storm strengthened. We didn't stop to make any coffee. There wasn't any wood for a fire and we hadn't time for a little thing like that. We gave the horses some oats and we ate what we could in the cold. It wasn't much.

"Just as soon as the horses had eaten their oats, we were on the trail again and it was but a few minutes before we were in the midst of a firstclass blizzard. We were on the open prairie and the wind and snow were terrific. I have seen some hard storms but I have seen only one which was worse than that. In the winter of 1885 and 1886, when I was riding range in Chouteau county, I was in the great storm which killed so many cattle. That was the only one I know of that was as bad as the one we faced that February morning on Camas prairie.

"Bill Chinn had a poor horse and he couldn't keep up with the rest. I had wet my feet at the ford, so I was compelled to walk part of the time to keep my feet from freezing. So Chinn and I fell behind the rest of the crowd and soon we lost all trace of them. The storm was so severe that in a few minutes the trail that the eight of them made was entirely obliterated. The storm grew worse and worse. It got so bad that the horses wouldn't face it any more.

"'We're lost,' said Chinn, 'and we'd better camp right here.'

"I suggested that there was no wood there in the open prairie and we would freeze to death if we tried to stop there. But Chinn said we could find a low place, spread our blankets and let the snow cover us. He had his way. We lay down there in the snow with our horses tied to us.

"Chinn was mistaken about the warmth of the snow blanket which was going to pile over us. In about 20 minutes I had such a chill that I jumped up and declared my intention of going somewhere. Chinn had been pretty well keyed up, but his whisky was dying out then and he had lost all his courage. He just wanted to lie there. Then he got scared clear through and set up a wail about our being lost. When he saw I was determined to go on, he crawled to his feet and we discussed the best way to go.

"I knew the horses would not go against the storm. I wanted to turn around and drift with the wind, which would take us back over the trail we had traveled in coming from the ford. Chinn declared he was going to follow the others who had gone ahead of us into the teeth of the storm. I told him to go to— any old place he wanted to, but I was going with the storm. And I started out, walking and leading my horse, for my feet were by this time in frightful condition.

"The snow was so thick that it was impossible to see much farther than the length of a horse, but I looked back after I had gone a little way and I could see Chinn following close upon the heels of my horse. Then I gave him a drink from my flask of brandy. I had refused to give him any while he was lying in the snow. That brandy put warmth and a little courage into him and we moved along in better spirits.

"At night we reached the river. The storm had taken us back to the ford and I wanted to cross right away. I was chilled and my feet were hurting. I didn't dare to cut off my shoes as I had nothing else to put on my feet, but it didn't seem as if I could stand it with them on. My feet were swollen and I knew I could never get the shoes back on if I took them off.

"But here Chinn had his way. He insisted upon staying on that side of the river and not trying the ford till morning. He said there was dry wood where we were and there might not be any on the other side. So with our hunting knives we cut some wood and started a fire. All the food we had left was a box of sardines. We ate part of that for supper that night and then we took turns sleeping and watching the fire. In the morning we ate the rest of the sardines for our breakfast and then turned our attention in getting across the river.

"The storm was still raging, though it was not as severe as it had been when we lost the rest of our party. We got to the river, but found there was so much slush ice running that it was impossible to ford. We were in a bad way.

"After we finally abandoned the idea of trying the ford, we rode out on the prairie. The storm had lessened considerably. We found a steer that was huddled up in the shelter of a little bunch of cottonwoods and had decided to kill the animal when we saw the outlines of a pack outfit in the storm. We forgot our cold and stiffness and thought only of getting to that train. We reached it in a few jumps and found that it was Alex Dow, Camille McGown and some other Frenchtown men, with a substantial outfit, going to the diggings. They had more than a quarter of a beef and were well provisioned otherwise. They fed us and got us to feeling better. Then they said we might join their crowd and we started out.

"We hadn't gone far before we met the crowd that had left Missoula the day before we did. There were Billy Lyons, Tom McNamara, Dick Cunningham, John Sheehan and some others whom I don't remember now. They had got through to the reputed diggings before the storm came and had started back, completely disgusted. They advised us to turn back, telling us that we would have our trouble for nothing, as there was never any gold in Maginnis gulch and they knew it. Pretty soon we were joined by the advance guard of our own party, whom we had lost in the storm. We took counsel together and it was decided that the best thing to do was to get home as soon as we could.

"Alex Morrigeau was with the first party we met and he took the lead as guide. All agreed that it was impossible for us to cross the river at the ford so we went down on the west side of the stream to where the Jocko empties into the Pend d'Oreille. There, at the mouth of the Jocko, Morrigeau shouted to an Indian on the other side of the river, telling him to ride in and find a ford where we could get across.

"The Indian demurred, but we offered him five dollars if he would make the attempt. He stripped and rode his horse into the icy stream till the water reached his neck. Then we told him to go back; that we didn't want any such ford as that. Finally, we found a place where we could get across. Morrigeau's horse was shod and he rode him right against the shore ice, spurring him so he climbed upon the ice and broke it with his shoes. This opened a way for the rest of us and we went along up the Jocko till we got opposite Morrigeau's place, where we forded the Jocko and had a rest and a feed at the place where we had tried to sleep the first night out.

"From there we rode back to Missoula, where we arrived late at night. It was through storming, but the thermometer was 40 below zero. That was the end of the Maginnis gulch stampede. I never saw the gulch myself then or since. I had all the experience with it that I wanted. My feet were badly frozen. My toenails all came off and the flesh peeled from my heels; there were bad cracks between my toes and I suffered a good deal. If I had been able to get off my shoes back at Antoine's ford, I would have lost my feet. As it was, the doctor talked for a while about amputating them.

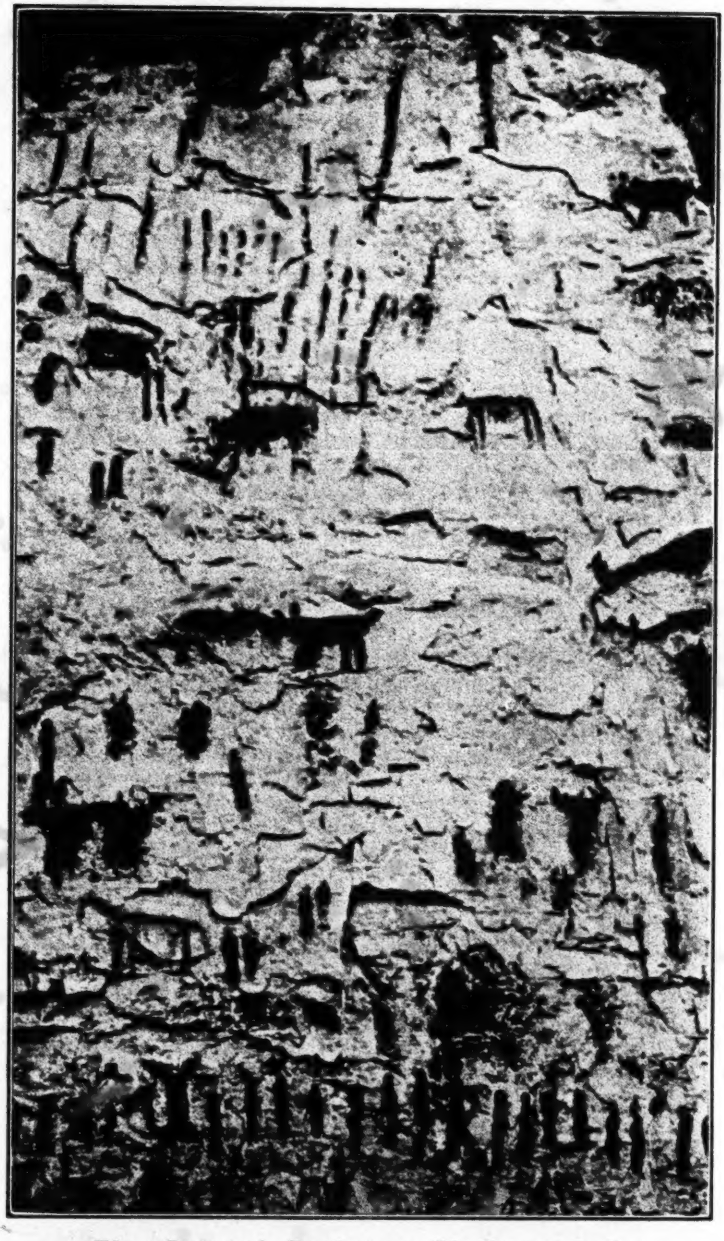
"All that I got on the trip I got from Indian blankets, and I had to burn all my clothes and fumigate myself. Even then I was lousy for a good while. Some of the others were as badly frostbitten as I was and there was a sore lot of placer miners in Missoula for all that winter. They were sore from the frost bites and they were sore from the disappointment of the wild-goose chase.

"I had never seen Martin Davis at that time, though I got to know him well in later years. He was an honest old fellow and he was honest in his belief that he had found rich gravel. But he didn't know as much as he might about placer gold.

"I met him at Plains—I think it was the next summer—and I asked him for the truth of the Maginnis gulch discovery. He said he had stopped on his way back from the mountains and he had seen a bar that looked like pay graved. He had panned a shovel of it and had 'got a nugget that weighed a cent.' I didn't say a word. I just looked at him. I saw that he meant it and thought he was all right. So I let it go at that. But my feet have never gotten entirely well. Every winter they get sore when the cold comes and I have to go around with a double supply of stockings and these big shoes."

With the exception of Charles Winter and Colonel Prescott, the participants in the Maginnis gulch stampede have crossed on the trail which leads to the city where the pavements are gold and where there is no need to prospect to find it. But if Gabriel wants to rouse them quickly on the morning of the Great Resurrection, he will make a megaphone announcement that there has been a rich bar found somewhere. For the call of the trail is strong. He who has listened to it once, never forgets its lure. It is irresistible.

November 11, 1911.



The Painted Rocks on Flathead Lake
—Photograph by Elrod.

FIGHTING FOR PAINT

DID YOU EVER stop to wonder where the Indians of this country got their paint colors in the days before the white man came? Always they painted. They painted themselves brilliantly for festal occasions, they daubed the color on thick when they were in mourning. Their use of paint for personal decoration was one of the Indian characteristics which impressed the early whites most strongly. And they were artists in the decoration of the skins which they tanned for their tepees and their clothing as well as of their own epidermis. Upon the smooth face of many a cliff, also, their pictured historical painting yet endures, though the storms of generations have beaten against it; these pictures of long years ago have endured wonderfully well.

In the wide circle of wigwams which surrounded the great dance tent at last summer's gathering of the Selish tribes near the Jocko agency, there was one old tepee which is historic among the Flatheads. It is known to be at least 80 years old—perhaps it is even older than that. Its fabric is of buckskin, tanned soft and pliable as only the squaws of years and years ago knew how to do it; it is discolored with the smoke of long decades of use; but upon its exterior may yet be discerned the emblazoned heraldic designs placed there by the artist hand of some Indian woman, perhaps a century ago. What they mean—these symbols—there are but few, if any, of the Indians who know. I have not been able to find a man or woman of the tribe who can tell exactly. They all say that the pictures, dimmed with age, recount the deeds of valor of the original owner of this ancient house of skins. "He was a big man," they say. "He killed many Blackfeet. This tells how."

At that same dance, last summer, Big Sam—veteran of many Flathead wars and a participant in the Stevens council of 1855—wore a white robe upon which was recorded by an Indian artist the personal history of the wearer; the pictures told of his daring thefts of Blackfeet and Crow horses; they told of his capture of Crow thieves who had stolen white men's horses and of the return of the animals to their rightful owners; they told of the battles in which he had fought with the hereditary foes of his people.

Where Flathead lake narrows, toward its foot, to the strait in which there are picturesque islands which compel the most indifferent tourist to pause in admiration, there are high cliffs which rise abruptly from the water's edge. Upon the surface of these rocks there are pictured stories of the tribal triumphs of the red men whose home this was as far back as there is any history. Nor storm nor sleet has effaced these picture writings of ages past. The pictured writings of the red-skinned artists of years long gone have survived the buffetings of the icy blast of winter and the fierce assault of summer storm.

All of these paintings are more or less familiar to those who know anything at all about western Montana. By some, they are passed by as a matter of not much importance. By a few they have been studied with care. Interesting they are as the hieroglyphs of Egypt or of Peru; yet they are regarded indifferently by many. They present an interesting subject for detailed investigation. It is not the purpose of this story, however, to discuss the interpretation of the Indian writings. I started out with the question, where did the Indians get their paint? That is a topic interesting enough, it seems to me for a Sunday story.

Where did the Indians get their paint? If a present-day dealer in covering for roofs—for instance—could discover the base of their compound and their method of mixing their pigments, would he not have a proposition that would be better than the Sellers eye-water which Mark Twain made famous? No gold mine ever known equaled the profits which would be his. He could advertise to any extent and he could deliver the goods. It would be such a treasure as Pizarro never found in the vaults of the Incas; it would be of greater value than the wealth which Cortez uncovered in the storehouses of the Aztecs.

But where was it and how did the Indians treat it? It is a question which doesn't occur, perhaps, to many who often see the pictures. It probably does not suggest itself to very many who see the brilliantly-hued faces of the painted Indians who yet follow the custom of their ancestors. The Indian today buys his paint at a store. Thereare not many of the young Indians who know more than the significance of the colors; they cannot tell where their fathers and their mothers got their paint before there was a white man's store at which to purchase it.

As a matter of fact, there are few of the younger Indians who care much for tribal custom or legend or practice. The other day I asked Duncan McDonald something about the old-time history of his mother's people and his reply came in the form of a protest against the indifference of the young Indians toward the habits of their people. It was an indignant protest—

sincere and emphatic and it came from the heart of the speaker. For Duncan McDonald knows more of the old customs of these Indians than any other man and he deplores their passing.

"Why," said Duncan as his eyes flashed, "there are no young Indians who know much about these things. It is not long ago that one of the Pablo buffalo was injured near my place, while he was being loaded for Canada—so badly hurt that he had to be killed. And Pablo said to me: 'Duncan, take the animal and do with it as you please.' I thought I would have a feast for the Indians and I called some of the young fellows who were there and asked them to skin the carcass. They could not do it; they didn't know how. They made an excuse that they didn't like buffalo meat. The fact was, they didn't know whether they did or not. And it was not until I found three old Indian women that I was able to get that buffalo skinned and made ready for cooking. Those women dug into it and soon had the animal skinned; they knew how; they had skinned buffalo on the east-side plains when their husbands and fathers were on the chase in the land of constant battle."

But this is a long way from the paint question. Duncan, in fact, didn't start out to discuss that question nor was it the matter of paint that I had in mind when I asked him the first question of the pleasant afternoon chat that led up to it. We had started out to discuss Indian names. But he who expects to come directly to the point in any talk with an Indian, even an Indian so intelligent as Duncan, has another guess coming. But one thing is certain—any talk with Duncan McDonald is sure to be interesting. I wish I could have one every week. He knows more old trails and bypaths than anybody else whom I ever met.

It all started a week ago, just after Duncan had placed his name upon the great register of Missoula county as a voting citizen. He, to the manor born, a native of Missoula county and a resident for more than 60 years, had attained full citizenship for the first time. "Where were you born, Duncan?" I asked. I knew that he had told me, years ago, of his early days as a boy at the old Hudson Bay post which gave its present name to Post creek in the Mission valley, but I had forgotten the exact location of the house where he first saw light.

"At the old post," was his reply. And he reached out for a pencil and a pad of paper. Rapidly he sketched a map, which showed the course of the creek and the immediately surrounding country.

"Quil-lin-tzi-mape," he said, "was the name which the Indians gave to the creek. Here—and he indicated with his pencil—was a dense line of bushes and small trees. It made a natural inclosure. Along the creek it was so dense that it could hardly be penetrated and it circled away from the water in two broad curves which almost met at the side of the big circle farthest from the stream. This made a natural corral and into this the Indians used to drive horses when they wanted to capture them. A few Indians standing with waving buffalo robes at the narrow entrance to this corral could hold the herd while others went in with ropes and captured them. The brush was so dense that no horses ever broke through. It was from the narrow entrance to this corral that the place got its name. 'Quil-lin-tzi-mape' means 'a narrow way' like you call a strait a narrow passage of water leading from a lake or a sea.

"The post was built about a quarter of a mile west of this corral. My father had planned to build it nearer the stream but the Indians told him it was too dangerous. They said the hostile Blackfeet would find the trees a good place for an ambush and would be sure to attack the buildings from cover if the post was built near the stream. There were some fine springs a quarter of a mile away and there is where the post was built. There are some of the old buildings standing yet. I was born there in 1849."

And then we got to talking about other names and their origin. Mission creek was called Sin-yal-e-min by the Indians. The name signifies "Surrounded" and is derived from the great battle which the Flatheads fought there when they avenged the defeats of years and utterly routed an invading force of Blackfeet who had ventured across the range for war. Overconfident, the Blackfeet had boldly encamped in the very midst of their enemies' country. They were surrounded in their camp; many were slain; a number of captives fell into the hands of the Flatheads; others escaped and fled back over the range. It was a mighty triumph and the place became a sort of national park for the west-side Indians, who named it to commemorate the event.

Of all the west-side streams, the Rattlesnake alone seems to have retained the name bestowed by the Indians, though it has been translated. "Kehi-oo-le" is the Indian name for the pretty stream which flows through Missoula and furnishes the city with its water supply. It means rattlesnake—just what we call the stream now, though why it is so called nobody seems to know for there are no snakes anywhere along its course. "Tim-sim-klich" is the aboriginal name for Lolo creek; it means "the stream with no salmon." "In-tschu-tet-tschu," which signifies "Willow river," was the red man's name for the Bitter Root.

And this brought us to the discussion of the paint question. Duncan had smiled at my attempts to express the guttural syllables of the Indian in letters. It is, indeed, not possible to do it accurately. "Et-tschu," which was the closest I could get to two of the syllables of frequent occurrence, I find by reference to the discussion by Father Palladino, to be given by that writer as "etiku," which means water when it is used in combination with other syllables. But as Duncan pronounced it, it didn't sound as either looks when placed in letters. The Indian guttural is purely a throat performance.

It was this which suggested the Yellowstone to my friend and he said: "The river which you call Yellowstone is not the stream which the Indians called by that name. Their name for the Yellowstone was 'Et-tschu-min.' It is derived from a peculiar sort of edged tool which the Indians used to separate the shreds of flesh from the inside of the skins which they were preparing for tanning—a 'flesher' it is called. There is a prominent bluff along the Yellowstone which is corrugated on its rim like the edge of this tool and the Indians, noting the resemblance, gave the name of the tool to the river.

"When we went to Washington last winter," said Duncan, "old Louison, looking out from the car window, pointed out to me this bluff and explained how the name was given to the river along which our train was running and along which he had hunted as a boy."

But the Indians had a Yellowstone. According to Mr. McDonald, it was what the present-day map of Montana shows as Wolf creek, flowing into the Judith. It was so called from the fact, that, near its head, there were large caves in which were great deposits of chrome-yellow clay. These caves were deep and there was some peril in securing the yellow paint from their depths. This peril came from the depth and the treacherous windings of the caves and, also, from the fact that all of the tribes, east and west, were constantly battling for the right to get this desirable coloring material. It was always disputed ground; there were battles fought there which were as fierce as any that were ever waged over the right to hunt buffalo on the plains between the Missouri and the Yellowstone. But the Flatheads risked the battles to get the yellow. It was one instance when a streak of yellow did not signify cowardice. The Indian who crossed the range to get this paint was no coward; there are many thrilling stories told of the excursions over the range in quest of this yellow paint. When the color tone of an Indian's decorative scheme was yellow, it was pretty certain that the color on his face was the only yellow there was about him.

"Somewhere between the ridge back of East Helena and Townsend," said Mr. McDonald, continuing the color talk, "there was a deposit of vermilion which furnished the Indians with their red paint in those days. This was, likewise, disputed ground and there was everlasting combat waged over the right to use this iron clay. These fights were not as fierce as were those which were waged farther east over the yellow paint, for the location was out of the regular Crow and Blackfeet country, but there was always more or less scrapping over the red supply."

The green coloring which the Flatheads used, they got from a deposit on the south fork of the Blackfoot, near Lincoln gulch. This was in the Flathead territory and was theirs to defend if there was any fighting over its possession. But there does not seem to have been the dispute in this regard which went on over the other hues.

"There is not an Indian living," said Duncan, "who knows the exact location of this green-paint supply. They know the general neighborhood and some of them remember having gone there as boys. But I have never found one who knew precisely where it was. I suppose it was some copper stain which they gathered as that is a copper region. But that is where they went. And they got the color. They used a good deal of green in their painting."

The journey for black was northward. Over across the Canadian border the Indians traveled. The black was needed in large quantities and there appears to have been little difficulty in the way of getting it aside from the long journey. Mr. McDonald thinks the black paint was some petroleum compound—some asphalt, perhaps—as there is now oil in that country and the black mud is common. But there was a particular black which they sought for this painting work. Possibly the petroleum was responsible for the durability of the outdoor painting which the Indian decorators did.

These four colors furnished the foundation for the mixtures of the Indian painters. There are yet some of the old Indian women who know something of the method of mixing and preparing the colors. But there are not many of them and there seems to be, as Mr. McDonald says, no tendency on the part of the younger Indians to become familiar with these old processes.

The Indian made much of his pilgrimages. They were all affairs of tribal state. Formal dances, in which the chant was of the nature of an incantation or a petition for success, preceded the departure of the tribe upon a hunting expedition or a war sortie. When the Flatheads left these western valleys for the trip across the mountains on their annual buffalo hunt, there was a dance. When they returned, if they were successful, there was another dance to celebrate the triumph. The war dance which was the formal celebration of victory was a prime event; it was the climax of the pomp of the Indian.

There were other pilgrimages; some for the theft of horses from the Plains Indians and some for the recapture of horses which had been stolen from here. There were journeys for social visits with kindred and friendly tribes. The Indians were restless for they had so little to do. Annually they journeyed to gather the bitter root, which was their staple vegetable food; they were upon one of these expeditions in Ross' Hole, when they met Lewis and Clark coming over from the Big Hole country. And so there was always some journey for each season of the year. The deer hunt, the foraging expedition and the like furnished occupation, each in its season.

But we have never thought enough about the matter to consider that a journey for paint was an essential feature of the Indian's calendar. Yet, why should it not have been? The paint was as much a necessity as the buckskin of his moccasins and leggings. He had to have paint for his personal adornment and for the expression of his feelings. When he went to war, he wore more paint than he did clothes and when he was plunged into mourning the paint which covered his face possessed the same significance as the crape veil which is worn by our people.

So, when you come to think of it, the item of paint was important for the Indian. He needed it and he had to get it. He risked life to obtain the bright colors which he craved. But was he so much of a pagan just for that? Do not we spend our hours, often in risky ventures, for the gratification of whims as unsubstantial as the Indian's quest for yellow stuff?

And wasn't the Indian's scheme a good one, after all. Would there not be some satisfaction to ourselves if we could, by streaking a stripe of color across our cheeks in the morning, proclaim to family and friends the state of our feelings. Would it not sometimes save a lot of needless trouble if we came down stairs wearing blazoned upon our faces the sign of our grouch?

November 18, 1911.

COEUR D'ALENE

ROMANTIC in its location is the Old Mission. Thrilling is its history. In the records of the Jesuits it is called the Mission of the Sacred Heart but the people of northern Idaho, the early missionaries, the trappers and the packers who journeyed over the old Walla Walla trail, all knew it as the Old Mission. The old building is delightfully situated upon a slight eminence, overlooking the beautiful valley of Mission river. It lacks the grandeur of environment which is possessed by old St. Mary's with its towering peaks of the Bitter Roots behind it—or the mission at St. Ignatius in the shadow of the lofty summits of the Mission range, but there is a softness about its surrounding scenery which suggests at once a water-color painting of some old-country scene, so soft are the hues, so tender the colorings and so restful the outlines of the picture.

At the foot of the little hill upon which the old church stands sweeps the Mission river, whose mirror-like surface reflects in perfect duplication every detail of the entrancingly beautiful scene which it traverses. Its banks are lined with a dense fringe of willows and cottonwoods and the broad meadows which stretch from its course to the base of the rolling hills on either side are as velvety and green as an English field. There is beauty, restful and complete, in whatever direction the observer turns his gaze. The eye lingers as the beholder drinks in this quiet beauty, reluctant to lose any part of it, unwilling to miss any bit of its charming detail. It is easy to understand that the Jesuit missionaries found here a helpful influence of Nature in their work.

The streams which feed Lake Coeur d'Alene on its eastern side are all peaceful rivers. The St. Joseph, St. Maries and Mission rivers are aptly designated as "shadowy" streams; their surfaces bear the ghosts of mountains and trees and bending shrubbery; the reflections of blossoming roses, flowering clematis, waving grasses and shimmering grain may be seen upon the water's glassy tide. "Shadowy" they are indeed, these streams, and wonderfully beautiful. To see them is to remember them always as parts of pictures which baffle the skill of the most expert artist, but which are so impressively beautiful that they need no artist's brush to preserve them. They are like other beautiful memories, precious treasures of the past.

This was the home country of the Coeur d'Alene Indians when the white men first entered this region. They were cousins of the Nez Perces and the Pend d'Oreilles--kindred also of the Flatheads and the Kalispells. In this region they lived, upon these meadows their horses fattened, in these hills they chased the deer, the elk and the moose. It was a beautiful place when the white man first beheld it; it became a favorite camping place for the hunter, the trapper and the freighter. Protected on the east by the rugged range of the Bitter Roots, these Indians did not suffer as did the Flatheads from the incursions of the eastern plains Indians. By nature they were gentle, and though brave, they did not seek combat.

When the Black Robes brought the message of the gospel to the Flatheads in the Bitter Root and, in 1841, built the mission at St. Mary's, the Coeur d'Alene Indians had learned of the new religion. In October of that year, when Father DeSmet made his first journey to the western coast to obtain seed wheat, oats and potatoes for the mission in the Bitter Root, he visited the Coeur d'Alene Indians. They urged him to establish a mission with them and obtained from him a promise that this would be done when more priests could be brought into the field. In 1842, Father DeSmet visited them again. In the autumn of that year the mission was founded and in 1843 Father Hoecken and Brother McGean joined Father Point and Brother Huet, who had established the church there. The mission was originally located upon a meadow in the basin of the St. Joseph, but the high water there compelled the removal in 1846 to the Coeur d'Alene or Mission river.

In 1850, when the defection of the Flatheads compelled the priests to abandon St. Mary's mission in the Bitter Root, Father Ravalli was assigned to the Old Mission and there, among the Coeur d'Alenes, he labored for the next seven years. It was he who built the church at Old Mission; there may yet be seen his handiwork, evidence of his artistic temperament and his skillful hand. The old church was originally built without a nail. Where a nail was needed, a hole was bored and a wooden pin was driven. The building is one of the monuments of his work, like the little church at St. Mary's and the larger one at St. Ignatius.

There have been many historic scenes enacted in the valley of the Old Mission. The old church has looked down upon warlike acts in the great drama of the northwest; it has witnessed scenes of joyous revelry; it has listened to the chant of holy men, has heard the fiery eloquence of Indian councils, has echoed the red man's warcry and, in comparatively recent years, has flung back the sound of rifle's crack and the scream of terror from innocent lips, in the horrible incidents of labor warfare.

In this valley, in 1853, Governor Stevens held a preliminary council with the Coeur d'Alene chiefs; again, in 1855, he met them here and in the spring signed with them the treaty which had been negotiated at the earlier council. Returning on his wonderful march from the great council on the upper Missouri, during which he crossed the Bitter Roots in deep snow over the Coeur d'Alene trail Governor Stevens, warned by Courier Pearson, found the Coeur d'Alenes in rebellious mood and on the brink of bloody war against the whites. All unexpected—for the Indians had no thought of the white man's attempting the Bitter Root crossing in deep snow—Stevens descended upon the Indians and by the very dash of his arrival and the courage of his demand that they adhere to their treaty agreement, he forced them into the renewal of their declaration of friendliness which their later and soberer thought approved.

Here it was that the tact and influence of Father Ravalli with the red men were helpful in promoting peace and in protecting the lives of the white men. As was the case, later, in the Nez Perce war when Joseph led his band through the Bitter Root, Father Ravalli went among the Indians and counselled them for peace. He was yet a young man when he came to the assistance of Stevens. But he was strong for the right and he was fearless. Always he was arrayed courageously and self-sacrificingly upon the side of righteousness, no matter how great the odds against him. Montana will never know the extent of her debt to him. Daily during the long years of his activity in this region, he added to the amount of that indebtedness, but he did it without ostentation and he never kept books. There was never a statement rendered.

It was here at the Old Mission that Governor Stevens, giving his men and animals a brief rest after their terrific exertion in crossing the Bitter Roots in the deep snow, organized his forces for the war which was ahead of him along the lower Columbia, where the reds were already lighting their trails with the flames of burning cabins and blazing their paths with the blood of white settlers. At the head of one of his companies he placed Christopher P. Higgins, who as trainmaster and counsellor had been his comrade on the long march into eastern Montana and back. And it was this commission which gave Higgins the title "Captain." by which he was known in his later years. There were a good many Missoula and Bitter Root people who never knew him by other name than "Captain" Higgins.

Governor Stevens went forth from the Old Mission to a victorious campaign. The little nucleus of his fighting force which he led away after the rest had recuperated its members, was the mainspring of a small army which gave irresistible force to the movement against the ugly reds in the lower country. That victory prevented a backward movement in the development of the northwest. It gave new courage to the whites and it taught the Indians that they must be good—by treaty agreement if they would, but at the point of rifle if they would not.

Many are the stories of comfort, of encouragement, of hospitality and of kindliness which can be told by the oldtime packers regarding the Old Mission. The crossing of the Bitter Roots by the Coeur d'Alene trail was a difficult climb at best and it often happened that an unexpectedly early snowfall rendered it perilous and the packers often reached the Old Mission at the west foot of this trail, worn and battered in their struggle with the elements. Always was there a welcome for them at the mission, always a word of cheery greeting, always protection from storm. The light which shone from the windows of the mission was a beacon, marking the place of safety.

Out across the valley from the Old Mission is Fourth of July canyon, in whose confines occurred the shooting of helpless and defenseless men and women in the first of the memorable labor conflicts which swept over the Coeur d'Alene mining region. This was in a year that is not far removed from the present. The Old Mission was then abandoned as a scene of Catholic activity, the priests having moved to populous centers; but the old church heard the shots and its walls echoed the shrieks which followed them. It was the darkest chapter in the history of the old valley.

The earliest white men in the northwest found a trail leading past the site of the Old Mission. Over this trail the Indians crossed the Bitter Root mountains, except in winter, when the deep snows made it impassable. The marches of Governor Stevens were made along this old Indian trail. The careful surveys made by Lieutenant Mullan, under the direction of Stevens, failed to discover a better crossing of the range and this trail, eventually, became a part of the famous Mullan road. When the Northern Pacific sought an east entrance into the great Coeur d'Alene mining region, the surveyors could find nothing more satisfactory than the acceptance of the Mullan line and the old trail became the roadbed of a railway. Over the mountains it led and down the narrow valley to the Old Mission. A tribute, this, to the excellence of the judgment of the Indian.

The trails of the Coeur d'Alene Indians were not altogether upon land. They were water trails, some of them, for the Coeur d'Alene Indians were canoe Indians as well as horse Indians; they combined the two means of locomotion. There was good reason for this. Their country fronted upon the beautiful Coeur d'Alene lake; it was penetrated in all directions by the beautiful rivers which feed that lake. The route to the westward was direct by water and extremely circuitous by land, for the man on horseback had to circle the lake, whose contour is devious and of great extent. So the main trail to the west led by river and lake.

And the white man, seeking a western outlet from this region found the most direct route to be by way of a little, narrow-gauge railway from Wallace to the Old Mission and thence down the river and across the lake by boat. It was another indorsement of the engineering ability of the red man. Later, a railway found its route around the lake, but for many years the favorite way from Wallace to Spokane was over the old narrow-gauge to Old Mission and thence down the river and over the lake.

It was a beautiful lake. The Northern Pacific, through the brilliant publicity methods of Colonel Charles Fee, made it one of the scenic attractions of the line whenever these were paraded before prospective tourists. From Missoula to Wallace over the Coeur d'Alene pass, the railway followed the old Coeur d'Alene trail.

From Wallace to Old Mission, the little narrow-gauge traced the route which had been originally defined by the tramp of moccasined feet. From Old Mission across the lake, the Northern Pacific's steamers followed in the wake of the Coeur d'Alene canoes which riffled the placid surface of the stream and had disturbed the waves of the beautiful lake. He who took this trip, enjoyed one of the rarest treats afforded by western travel routes.

But the inevitable happened. The romantic trip over the little, wobbly, narrow-gauge road and the ensuing ride down the shadowy river and out upon the broad expanse of the lake, enjoyable though they were had to yield to the utilitarian demand for quicker service and fewer changes. The orders came west to tear up the narrow-gauge track and to dismantle the steamer.

This week is the anniversary of the last trip of the Georgia Oakes from Coeur d'Alene City to Old Mission and of the last schedule-run of the narrow-gauge from there to Wallace. E. J. Pearson, afterward chief engineer of the Chicago, Milwaukee & Puget Sound railway, was division superintendent of the Northern Pacific in 1896, when the orders came to tear up the little track. He was just starting on the monthly pay trip when the message was received and he invited me to go with him in the pay car to Hope, then the western terminal of the division, and then to accompany him to Spokane and back across the lake and on the last ride up the river. J. W. Buford, now assistant treasurer of Missoula county, was pay clerk and the three of us were companions on the interesting ride.

I had made the trip before and it had become one of my favorite jaunts. On this account the final run of the steamer up the Coeur d'Alene river was specially interesting. It was a farewell to familiar and loved scenes. It was November, 1896, and we got back home on Thanksgiving day. The trip was pleasant from start to finish. The lake was more than usually beautiful, it seemed to me. Winter was a bit early that year but there was no sign of ice in the lake; it was not until we turned into the river that we encountered this visible sign of winter. Slush ice was running freely there, but the big steamer didn't mind it and we found an added element of interest in watching the floes sailing toward us.

Across the lake from Coeur d'Alene City we steamed to Harrison, the sawmill town at the mouth of the river. There was a stop there for the transfer of freight and then the prow of the boat was turned up the river. The fragrance and color of summer were not there; but the crisp November air made the ride invigorating and our attack upon the famous fried chicken dinner for which the boat had a reputation remembered by all who ever made this trip, won us fame as valiant trenchermen.

We followed the winding course of the river between banks which were then fringed with bare-limbed trees. The summer cloak of foliage had fallen before the touch of Jack Frost. Here and there, rounding a bend in the stream, we would see a man or a woman signalling from the bank; there would be a stop performed with all the ceremony of a tieup of a Mississippi boat, the passenger would be taken aboard and on we would steam toward the Old Mission. It was fine, this ride, even though it was the last. The constantly changing scenes, the inspiring surroundings, the pleasant company, all conspired to intensify the pleasure of the voyage. There was everything to make it pleasant; there was nothing to detract from the enjoyment of the day.

Finally, the steamer poked her nose around the last turn in the river and there, before us, on the pedestal, nature-built, where Father Ravalli had chosen the site so many years before, stood the Old Mission church. The autumn sunshine illumined the building against the gray background of the mountains. The building stood out like a clearcut cameo and the picture which it formed is yet distinct in my mind. Around that last bend the steamer glided. Bells jangled in the engine room. Up in the pilot house the steersman whirled his great wheel quickly. The paddle wheels stopped. The big boat swung around. Another jangle of bells and the engines reversed. The boat was slowed down and eased in toward the landing. Deckhands ran to and fro; the hawser was passed out; the boat was made fast and the last voyage of the old steamer up Mission river was ended.

We took the baby train on the narrow-gauge and another hour found us in Wallace. The pay car had come around to meet us and our holiday was over. We worked our way back over the rest of the Coeur d'Alene trail. It is a beautiful name, Coeur d'Alene, and there has been a good deal of discussion as to its derivation. The best information I can get, traces the origin of the words—which mean "heart of awl"—to the alleged comment of one of the old tribal chiefs, who characterized a rapacious trader as having a "heart like an awl."

November 25, 1911.

THE VILLARD INVASION

WINDING around on the abrupt slope of McDonald peak on what was until very recently the Flathead reservation, there is the trace of an old trail. It is pretty well obscured now with brush and young timber, but for a good many years it was distinct on the mountain side and there were few travelers across the reservation who did not ask what it was and why. The old stage-drivers on the reservation lines used to have its history well at their tongues' ends and they told a good story about it.

The trail originally was a wagon road, laboriously dug out of the steep side of the mountain at an easy grade and it reached a long way up the peak. It was a part of the plan of Henry Villard for the entertainment of his guests at the celebration which attended the opening of the Northern Pacific for through business. This celebration had its culmination in the driving of the golden spike at Gold Creek and it attracted great financiers from the European money centers, dukes and earls and lesser fry in the ranks of nobility. Many of the prominent men of this country were there and practically all of Montana made the pilgrimage to Gold Creek, saw the crowd, heard the hammer drive the spike and then went hungry while they watched the distinguished visitors dine sumptuously and wash down their viands with champagne.

The spike had been driven and the crowd had dispersed. But between Gold Creek and Puget sound there were many things which Henry Villard wished to show the men who had financed his railway venture and who must be entertained at any cost. There were novelties innumerable along the newly constructed line and there were beauties which the visitors must see. Among these special attractions was McDonald peak with its glaciers and with the gem of a lake which nestles at its base. So, as a supplementary entertainment, the great promoter had arranged an excursion to the mountain which is the summit of the Mission range.

Down Hell Gate canyon from Gold Creek, the excursion trains had moved with cautious pace, leaving the little town to

McDonald Peak —Photograph by Elrod.

rest in the memory of its one great day and the recollection of its one great throng. Through Missoula and up the hill, overlooking the Coriacan defile, the excursionists had been hauled over rails which were feeling for the first time the friction of transcontinental wheels. Over the crest of the secondary divide the trains had moved and then had dropped down the easy grade to Ravalli.

Back of Ravalli, the bluffs of clay rose, gray and uninviting, then as now. Out from Ravalli led the narrow coulee which is the one way through this forbidding wall. Along beside the track rippled the beautiful current of the Jocko and that was the only attractive feature of the landscape. The gray wall of the bluffs hid the lofty range beyond; there was no hint to the curious tourists of the grandeur of mountain and the beauty of valley which lay upon the other side of this forbidding screen.

But Villard knew. He possessed all the talents of a successful showman; he was nothing if not spectacular, and in this side excursion he had arranged as dramatic an experience as could be planned anywhere. Nowhere in the world is there a sight so dramatically impressive and so impellingly beautiful as the first glimpse which the traveler gets of the Mission range and of the valley at its base, as he drives slowly up that little coulee back of Ravalli and breasts the crest of the hill and looks over upon the magnificent picture which is spread before him.

Villard had seen this and he knew its spectacular possibilities. He had planned to take every advantage of his opportunity. To make it possible to get out of it all there was in it, he had constructed that wagon road which made the ascent of McDonald peak an easy jaunt to a man who had ordinary activity. And to crown his plan, he had arranged to have the expedition personally conducted by Duncan McDonald.

Duncan McDonald, all through the days of the preliminary survey and the later excitement of the construction, had been the intimate friend and adviser of the Northern Pacific people in their dealings with this part of the country. He had piloted them to hidden passes, he had ferried them over treacherous streams and he had found them food and shelter when they were hungry and weary. They had learned to depend upon this man, more Scotch than Indian by breeding, but much more Indian than Scotch by inclination and sympathy. And Villard knew that, as guide, Duncan would add to the dramatic possibilities of the occasion.

Major Ronan was then agent. He had co-operated in the arrangement of the plans for the excursion to McDonald peak and he was at Ravalli with Duncan McDonald to meet the tourists and to show them something well worth their while. There were between 200 and 300 of the tourists who wanted to see the country, but who did not want to make even the exertion necessary to ride up the trail; there were perhaps half that number who felt equal to the task of the trip up the mountain. And it took some time to get the two parties lined up.

This was the situation which presented itself to Duncan McDonald when he reported for duty on the morning after the Gold Creek incident. It was not as had been arranged, but it was a condition which had to be met and the arrangements had to be changed to alter the situation. There were not any too many wagons and buggies in that part of the country in those days; when all had been impressed for service in the transportation of the tenderfoot sightseers, there was no surplus and, as may be imagined, there was a motley collection in the line that was drawn up to receive passengers for the excursion.

Recently I asked Mr McDonald for some of the details of this remarkable invasion of the Mission valley. He laughed. "It was the greatest thing I ever saw," he said. "There was never anything like it, I guess."

"I went to the train to see what the plans were that morning," continued Duncan. "General Grant was not feeling well and could not make the trip. Villard was not equal to the ride, he said, and he would stay with the train. But there was a small party of young men who wanted to climb the peak over the road that had been built for their convenience. There were also more than two hundred of the tourists who were either too old or too fat to make the trip up the mountain, but who wanted to see the lake and the valley. They said they would be ready after a while and Mr. Villard said we must have them back at Ravalli by 4 o'clock.

"So I told Angus, my brother, to take the ones who were going to climb the mountain and to get started with them right away as they would have to move fast to get back on time. Angus took them after a short wait and I had to stay for the old ones, the fat ones and the English lords to get ready. There were provisions enough packed to take an expedition to the pole, though they were not just of the sort that an Arctic expedition would take. Champagne and fried chicken were the chief provisions and the room which was left was filled in with bread and the rest of the accompaniments.

"We finally got them all loaded. As guide, I had to ride ahead and the long line of carts, wagons and buggies followed. You can imagine how many it took to carry almost three hundred of them, with the drivers and the lunch. The wagon right behind me had a driver and three passengers. Tight behind that drove Major Ronan in a cart with one passenger. I don't remember who it was that the major had, but in the wagon right behind me there was a little, slim New York man sitting beside the driver and on the back seat were Senator Edmunds of Vermont and

Lord Norwood of England. I shall never forget that wagon-load; it made me more trouble than all of the rest of the experiences that day.

"As we went up the hill, leaving Ravalli, the little man on the front seat called out to me to get out of the way as I was making too much dust. I knew I wasn't making dust enough to annoy anybody who was decently civil and I kept right on. He kept calling to me, though, and I got tired of hearing him. So I rode ahead, faster, and got out of the way. I could even then hear him saying something, but I had got far enough out of the way so that I couldn't tell what it was he was saying and I didn't care.

"They made a great picture, those fellows in that wagon. The little, mean chap on the front seat leaned forward and away from the driver as far as he could, all curled up and squinting ahead at me. He would have liked to shoot me, by the way he looked. On the back seat Edmunds leaned back comfortably and seemed to take a good deal of interest in the country. Lord Norwood, the representative of British nobility, was a weak little fellow. He hadn't strength enough to hold himself on the seat. Every jolt of the wagon sent him bobbing one way or the other; he flopped about all the way over the hill but he made no murmur. The little lad on the front seat did all the murmuring for the crowd. The Englishman tried to be good natured about it but it was hard work for him to smile.

"Well, I kept so far ahead that I couldn't hear his growling and I don't know whether it was far enough or not to keep my dust from bothering the lad on the front seat. I'm sure I didn't care whether it bothered him or not. We went over the hill and down the road to the mission; there was plenty of admiration for the scenery and the kicker didn't have so much to say after we got out of the draw into the road down to the valley. Things were going first rate, when an accident happened to that front wagon.

"Getting down into that valley toward the mission, the road crossed some low, wet places. Cattle had been wallowing in some of these sloughs and had made them rather miry and that front wagon drove through one which was particularly soft. The team gave a jump to pull the wagon through the mire and the sudden yank threw the back seat with its two occupants right over backward into that soft mud.

"I heard a yell and turned back. It was the funniest sight I ever looked at. The seat had dropped so that its back was in the mud and the men had retained their positions on the seat. This left them with their feet in the air and their heads and backs in the mud, into which they were sinking without any more effort to get out than a mired mule would make. They were just settling down into the soft mud and their friend from the front seat was doing a dance around them, shouting that they would be drowned, calling for help and accusing me of having arranged that spill on purpose.

"Major Ronan, who was driving right behind the unfortunate rig, just turned his cart so as to avoid the mudhole and the other rigs behind followed him so there was no further accidents and the long procession passed the men in the mud, some of the travelers being amused and some of them being alarmed, but none offering to help them out.

"I got to the scene of trouble and as quickly as I could helped Lord Norwood and Senator Edmunds to their feet on solid ground. They were fairly plastered with soft mud. I got some grass and curried them down, getting all of the mud off that I could, but they were rather streaked even when I had done my best. And all the time that mean little fellow from New York was jumping around and accusing me of doing it all on purpose. He said I had arranged it with the driver and he talked to me as if he were a slavedriver and I, his slave. But I kept on wiping the mud from the unfortunates and wishing all the time that it had been the front seat that had upset. If that mean little cuss had been the one in the mud, he would have gone a whole lot deeper before I pulled him out. I tried to tell him that it was the fault of the men on the seat that they had not got out more quickly.

"Well, I got them loaded into the wagon again, with the seat tied down, and we went on to the mission, where the rest of the party had landed ahead of us. It was all so new to them that these easterners had scattered all over the place. They were examining the beadwork on the Indians' clothes; they were guessing as to whether certain Indians were men or women and making bets on it; they were chasing butterflies; some were chasing the naked Indian babies that were toddling about the grounds; others were investigating the old church and some were looking at the schools. They were everywhere and I had to read the riot act to get them together.

"I got a few of them together and told them that my instructions were to get them back to their train at 4 o'clock in the afternoon and if they wanted to see Lake McDonald they would have to get together in a hurry or we would turn back right there. There was a scurrying and the roundup was made. We got the line formed and we moved on toward Post creek.

"We got to the lake all right. The visitors were well pleased with a small look at the scenery and then demanded lunch. Out of the wagons came the greatest lunch that was ever spread in the Mission valley; there was an ocean of champagne and there was fried chicken and cake and fruit in great quantities. It was a champagne crowd, all right, and when they had taken one dip into the wine, the scenery looked better to them than it had before. They scattered along the shore of the lake and admired the scenery as they ate their lunch. They were hungry and they showed it.

"But there was not one of them who thought that I might be hungry. There was never an invitation to me to have a bite. And I was getting angrier the longer I watched them eat. Lord Norwood had recovered from his scare and was doing more eating than I ever saw a weak man do before. He was still muddy, but he was happy and didn't seem to remember his troubles at all. I lost sight of the mean little fellow of the front seat and I didn't care if I never found him.

"But I finally saw Edmunds detach himself from his companions and with an old chum who had been in another wagon, move from the crowd a bit behind a bunch of bushes. I followed them and got up to them in time to hear Edmunds say to his friends: 'This is the greatest trip I ever had. I never saw such wonderful scenery as this and I never in my life saw anything half as funny as our spill in the mud. I haven't dared laugh before for fear of hurting the feelings of somebody. But I have got to laugh now.'

"I let him laugh some and then I stepped up to him. 'Mr. Edmunds,' I said, 'has it occurred to you that I might like something to eat. If somebody doesn't get me some lunch right away; I am going back to the mission to get some, and I shall not come back here again. I'll just leave you to find your way back to the train.'

"Well, I think Edmunds was truly sorry that I had been overlooked. Of course, my threat about leaving them didn't amount to anything; they couldn't miss the way back to Ravalli; all they would have had to do was to follow their own tracks, but they didn't think of that. They were scared as well as sorry and they hustled when Edmunds told them the conditions.

"You should have seen the lunch that I got then. There was everything that anybody could want and there was enough of it for a dozen men. They looked at the scenery and admired the light on the peaks and marveled at the glaciers till I told them it was time to go back to the train.

"The return trip was made without incident and it was a tired crowd that got back to Ravalli, just in time. When I saw the way those fat old fellows went for the fried chicken and champagne, I understood why it was that they didn't feel equal to the longer trip up the mountain. The ride they had was all they could stand; they were all in when we got back to the train and there was another raid on the commissary right away. Angus got back with his smaller party from the climb up the mountain and we turned over to Mr. Villard all of his guests, uninjured except for the clothes of Senator Edmunds and Lord Norwood. And they were not troubled about that. The injured feelings of the mean little fellow on the front seat were slower in healing than were the scattered wits of the two men who had fallen out of the wagon.

"We turned away from the train after we had received the thanks of Mr. Villard and pretty soon the excursionists left for the west, to see new wonders and more scenery. That was one of the queerest experiences I have ever had in connection with visitors at the reservation and I have met a good many since then."

It would be interesting to take the trip across the reservation now with some of the men who were members of that old Villard excursion. They would find the grandeur of the mountains undimmed; they would see the same glory of sunset light on the immortal peaks of the Mission range; they would discover the beauty of Lake McDonald unchanged; they would find the valley even more beautiful than it was when they saw it. They would find the farmer where they saw the Indian. They would marvel at the wonderful development which has followed the invasion which they started and which was made possible by the construction of the road which their money built. They would discover that Henry Villard, though a good deal of a showman in the arrangement of his stage settings, had, nevertheless, rare foresight and that his wobbly line of rails across the continent has strengthened into one of the most substantial railways in the world.

December 3, 1911.

A PIONEER COURTSHIP

SOME day I hope to hear, from the lips of some of the pioneers who crossed the plains with one of the old wagon trains, the story of the pleasant incidents which filled in the days of the long, slow journey. When I do hear it, I shall at once transfer it to paper, for it is the missing link which is needed to make complete the chain of narrative, covering that wonderful period of western life. We know of the difficulties which attended the routine of teaming—the breaking of mules and oxen, the herding of the animals on the way, the repairing of broken wagons, the hard drives to reach night forage—all these and the hurried formation of the wagon train for defense against the attacks of the red men are familiar to us, almost as familiar as if we had been participants—all of us—in the scenes which are described so graphically and so interestingly by those who actually did take part in them. But I am sure that the long trip across the plains was not all irksome; there must have been many delightful experiences on those journeys; we know that strong friendships were formed there; we have been told of the excitement of the buffalo hunt and the keen pleasure of stalking antelope. Then there were the evenings before the early bedtime—there must have been some pleasant hours there. It is natural that these little sidelights should have been forgotten in the narrations which we have had; they were the every-day things which didn't seem to count when there were so many big things to tell about. But I believe we should dig after them while it is yet possible to get them.

I came west early enough to experience some of the pleasure of riding the plains. I have spent a good many days and nights in saddle and buckboard on the Wyoming prairies, and I know there is nothing more beautiful than a moonlight night in summer on these plains. That is what leads me to the belief that it was not all work and no play on the trips of the trailblazers across the great plains that stretched between the outposts of civilization and the pot of gold which awaited the emigrants when they should reach the rainbow's foot in the mountains of the far west. They were mostly young people in those wagon trains and where there are young people, the plodding of oxen cannot permanently depress nor can the violence of stern warfare entirely dispel pleasure. Pranks there must have been, happy excursions there surely were, pretty romances there must have been. There is a great supply of historical narrative in this field if we can get at it. And these stories would be the very best that could be written of the hegira to the land of gold.

A few weeks ago I wrote the story of an early-day Montana farmer and told of some of the experiences of Martin Barrett in getting started in the ranch business on the trail to Bannack. To me, there was no incident in that bit of interesting personal history than the chapter which told of the way in which Mr. Barrett got his wife. It will be remembered that the young farmer had gone back to his Canadian home in the autumn to get some supplies and a team of good horses for his farms, leaving his miner-partner at the ranch. Not a word did he write to the partner and the latter supposed Barrett was dead until, one day the next summer, Barrett showed up at the ranch and spoke so unexpectedly that the partner fell over backward and lost the only needle on the place, with which, at the time, he was engaged in the arduous task of mending his trousers. "He asked me," said Barrett, "if I had brought home a wife. I told him I had not, but that I knew a mighty fine girl. 'Go and get her,' said he, 'as I have lost my needle.' 'All right,' I replied, and I went and got her."

The woman who became Mrs. Barrett under these somewhat precipitate circumstances had been the companion of the returning ranchman on the way from Omaha to Montana. She was the one girl in the wagon train with which he traveled and Mr. Barrett admits ingenuously that he got to know her pretty well. Certain it seemed when we read his story that there had been some mutual understanding between them; the wedding was not by any means as impromptu as it seemed from a casual reading of the pretty story. I believed that then, and since then there have fallen into my hands the notes of some reminiscences of Mrs. Barrett. Looking through these, I am more certain than ever that there is material in the history of that important trip across the plains for a delightful romance. Circumstantial evidence all points that way. The outcome justifies the conclusion.

It is possible to frame up the story of a beautiful courtship between these two on that long ride from Omaha to Denver and then to Montana. It does not require much imagination to do it, either. I am pretty sure that the days were happy days, that the moon never shone as brightly before as it did for these two in the evenings in camp, that the promise of the land ahead was only an incident, it was overshadowed by the supreme happiness of the days that were the todays then and that left little to be c

desired for tomorrow. I had framed some such romance as this just by considering the story as it was given in meager detail by Martin Barrett. The little imaginative tale becomes a reality, though none the less romantic, as I read between the lines in the notes which are before me, covering the story which Mrs. Barrett tells of that eventful journey.

There were days of weariness, of course, when the dust seemed intolerable as it rose from the scuffling feet of the mules or the dragging hoofs of the oxen. There were days of terror, too, when an attack by the Indians seemed certain to come. But these were mere passing incidents in the glorious whole and the trip was the journey of all journeys to these two young people—the lusty, ambitious young Irishman and the quiet, little Missouri girl who was on her way west to teach school, but who found another position. And there is pleasure in the contemplation of the pictures which we can readily conjure up of the happiness of those days—they were together on the trail more than two months—and it is easy to imagine the delight the other members of the party took in the romance which was developing as the miles were counted off. The way must have been happier for them all, and the miles shorter.

It was in the spring of 1867 that Alice E. Cook and her brother started overland from Missouri for Montana. They drove a mule team and were to meet their father in Montana, he having gone up the Missouri by steamer. The brother and sister drove their team to Fort Kearney and there they had to wait for the assembling of a wagon train for the journey through the Indian country, the reds being particularly bad that year. Among the outfits which joined the Cooks to make up the train was Martin Barrett, returning from his winter's visit in Canada to his new home in Montana. In her notes, Mrs. Barrett does not mention this fact until later, but she tells one incident which proved that something had happened between Kearney and Denver.

"At Denver," she writes, "an uncle of ours stayed and he wanted me to stop there, too. He brought a man to the wagon who offered me seven dollars a week if I would stay—big wages in those days for a girl. I declined, saying I was coming to Montana to teach school; he told me I would have to have credentials; I had them, all right, but—here the ingenuousness of it—I took another situation after reaching Montana."

There were the usual Indian scares on the journey; the young men and boys on guard had the habit of seeing hostile Indians behind every sage brush. But there was no actual attack and the train reached Denver without accident. Mrs. Barrett tells of the loss of some horses along the Platte river and of the daring of one of the men, Samuel Silvy, who swam the river to bring them back and was compelled to remain on the other side all night. In the morning when he swam back, he nearly drowned, but was revived by the efforts of his friends. He became a lifelong friend of the Barretts in Montana. The wife of the captain of the train had had experience in Indian fighting; she was a tender woman and made the journey pleasant by her kindness to the girl who was so alone and so new to the plains life. The older woman declared she would take her own life rather than fall into the hands of the Indians and sought to exact a promise to that effect from the girl. But life held much for the girl, and she would not promise. Happily, there never rose an occasion to make such desperate action necessary.

The stay in Denver was brief. Those who were going further took up the march as quickly as possible and journeyed on to Salt Lake. Here the train divided, a considerable number following the California trail. The train captain led the Montana-bound travelers northward. His home was at Red Rock. The only exciting incident of the northward journey occurred at the ferry on the Snake river, where the man in charge of the ferry was somewhat the worse for liquor. His protestations that he would see no harm come to the young woman, as she was the second girl to cross that year, did not tend to relieve her much. But she was ferried over safely. At Red Rock, just three months after she had left her Missouri home, Miss Cook found a temporary home with Mr. and Mrs. S. Estes. This was July 10. The notes do not set forth directly the reason why the journey was ended there instead of being continued to the meeting which had been arranged with the father at Helena or at Benton. But the sequel does show it.

"I stayed with Mrs. Estes," writes the reminiscent pioneer, "until the sixth of August, when I was married to Martin Barrett, who crossed the plains with us from Fort Kearney. He had a ranch on Horse Prairie and there we have lived for 40 years."

There was a reason why the girl didn't stay in Denver for seven dollars a week; there was the same reason why she stopped at Red Rock instead of going on to Helena to meet her father. It was a mighty good reason, and its name was Barrett. It was a fortunate thing for the young man that he joined just the train he did at Fort Kearney. It was a pleasant act of Providence, too, for the girl. There on the primitive ranch at Horse Prairie, she entered upon her new life, which was destined to be so happy. The casual meeting at Kearney, the happy companionship on the plains, the passing-up of Denver, the evidently agreed pause at Red Rock led up to a climax which was hastened by Barrett's partner—but it was a climax which would have been reached ultimately without the providential loss of that needle; it had evidently been all arranged, though neither of the parties to the transaction says so; the needle incident merely served to insure the indorsement of the ranch partner. Home would not be home without a needle and the young wife brought that.

"When I came to the Prairie," says Mrs. Martin, "there wasn't another woman nearer than Bannack, eleven miles away. Once I did not see a woman for two months. When, one day, a woman camped near the house I took a small pitcher of cream (as an excuse) and visited the lady."

With a wife in the home, a garden became necessary, and it was fenced. The place, we may be sure, assumed an inviting appearance which attracted the attention of passers-by. It was home, indeed, and a happy home. The Barretts became known through the county; their friends multiplied; they were the pioneer farmers of that region and their farm is today one of the landmarks of the country.

A year after the wedding, in the summer of 1868, the Barretts made a trip to Helena to see the parents of the young wife and to explain to them why she had not been able to see them sooner. It was a happy meeting. The Cooks had come up the river. The family reunion was pleasant and the young people returned somewhat regretfully on some accounts, to their farm. They camped beside the trail, going and coming, and the trip to Helena, made in this fashion, became the rule with them each year until the railways came.

An interesting experience in the life of the young woman pioneer came in 1877, when Chief Joseph and his Nez Perce warriors, after the battle of Big Hole, came down toward the Prairie in their flight from Howard. There was a state of terror prevalent for days which was not allayed until the retreating reds had passed.

"All the women on Horse Prairie and at Red Rock," says Mrs. Barrett, "were taken into Bannack and remained there for two weeks. The men had the courthouse barricaded; two barrels of water were taken into the building and the windows had feather beds piled against them so the shot and bullets would not reach us. The men had also a small fort in the street near the well. When our first scare came, one man, Con Bray, was in the fort. One brave fellow had a young wife and he told her to go to the courthouse while he would hide in the willows; and that is just what he did. We had several such scares. In one of them a woman fainted in the street because she could not find her little girl. Another woman carried a satchel which flew open in her flight and its contents spilled; they were not pearls, but silver spoons, which were quite as scarce at that time.

"One night, while we were in the courthouse, T. H. Hamilton came in from upper Horse Prairie, 20 miles above our place, with the news that the Indians were coming and he had cut the traces of his team and ridden for his life. He had stopped at our house and roused the boys and was very indignant because they had taken his horse to corral their own. Then we learned of the march of the Indians by Bloody Dick creek; here five men were killed at the Montague & Winters place. Some of the men at Bannack went out with a wagon to get the bodies. Mrs. Winters went with them and found her home all torn up and Montague, her husband's partner, dead in the doorway. The men had remained to finish putting up the hay; they had thought there was no danger. Three bodies were found here. The men didn't go further up as miners reported the Indians to be hiding in the willows above. The other two bodies were not recovered till later. These two were the remains of Cooper and his partner who had been hiding in the willows, and had been told by Major Jim, a smart Indian, to come out and they would not be harmed; Cooper was taken over a hill and shot down by the Indians. Another man, Farnsworth, had slept in a dry ditch safely; in the morning he had crawled out to reconnoiter and was shot by a band of the Indians.

"There was an impressive funeral in Bannack when the three bodies were brought in. The cemetery was on a hill and while the funeral was in progress some drunken fellows gave the alarm that the Indians were coming; there was a stampede at once. When the war scare started some of the local stockmen were in the Sheep creek country; they knew nothing of the trouble. In the party were two Wadarns boys, whose mother was with us in Bannack. She tried to get somebody to ride out and warn the boys; when none of the men would go, she rode the forty miles herself, gave the warning and was unharmed. My husband and G. M. Brown rode down the Horse Prairie that night without seeing anybody. They buried the account books of the ranch and hid the household valuables in the willows. When General Howard came along he placed a guard at the ranch. The cache was not molested except by some whites, who took some food which was needed and which was not begrudged them, except in one instance when a skulker stole a confederate bill and a hair switch. Did his wife need it or did he want it to show for a scalplock?"

That ended the Nez Perce scare. There was another the next year when it was rumored that the Bannacks had risen, but it was a groundless report and nothing came of it except a week's stay by the women in town.

These were incidents of the early life of this brave Montana farm woman. Soon after came greater comforts with the advent of the railway; books and more frequent mails were not the least. But the memories of the days when women were few and perils many linger. They form interesting chapters in the history of the state.

December 9, 1911.

THE DRAGON OF THE SELISH

ONE SUMMER afternoon, a good many years ago, while the Flathead reservation was yet a national reserve, I lay in the shade of the grove along the bank of the Jocko river, opposite Ravalli station, waiting for a train which was six hours late. It was an ideal Montana summer day. There were birds in the trees above me and the Jocko's ripple made music at my feet. The drone of insects furnished the accompaniment in subdued chords, while the rustle of the leaves in the summer breeze—lazily stirring—set the tempo quite in accord with the afternoon and its mood. I had been several days upon the reservation, visiting with friends, Indian and white, and had heard some pleasant tales of the days when the reservation was primitive, when the white man was just finding the way over the wall back of the Jocko which shuts out the Mission valley along the overland trail. It was a day for dreams and I indulged in the contemplation of scenes based upon the stories which had been told to me. The quiet of the summer lent its magic to my day-visions and the red men seemed real warriors and hunters. I had harked back to the days before the Black Robes came. It was as if I were a spectator at a drama designed for me alone.

Came then Duncan McDonald—came so quietly that I knew not he was there until a twig cracked beneath his moccasined foot, came as if he were a figure in the drama I had been building, came with the quiet, cordial greeting which is his wont, came unexpectedly but so naturally did he fit into my dreams that it seemed as if I had been waiting for him to appear. Duncan drew forth his tobacco pouch and sat upon his heels beside me. I filled my pipe and, as we smoked, he told me stories of the mythology of his Indian ancestors. Told me of the doings of Coyote, of Grizzly Bear, the Salmon, told me of the infinite powers which Coyote possessed and of how he employed them for the benefit of the Red Man, equipping the Indian for the struggle for existence which he must wage if he were to survive in the contest with the elements among which the Great Spirit had placed him. Coyote, in the legends of the Selish, is the counterpart of Br'er Rabbit in the negro myths, except that the clever-

The Dragon of the Selish (Indicated by Arrow) —Photograph by Elrod.

ness of Coyote was employed to help the Red Man and to circumvent the plots of his foes. And of all the stories which I heard that afternoon, the legend of how some animals are small and others large is the one which has always seemed to me to be the most picturesque.

I wish I could give the story the graphic touch which Duncan gave it. However carefully I write, the tale must lose in dramatic effect. It was told with the orchestral accompaniment of all of Nature's summer instruments. It was as if we two were alone in the world, save for the beasts and birds and the inanimate things about us. No other human voice disturbed the recitative Indian monotone and all the other sounds blended to add to the effect of the story of the Dragon—the Dragon which had Grizzly Bear for a dog and which was worsted by Coyote in a struggle which set free all the animals of the earth. Innumerable cigarettes were rolled and smoked by the narrator. So absorbed was I that I let my pipe go out. I lay there and listened to what was the most dramatic recital that I ever heard. And here, robbed of its dramatic associations, set down in colorless language—but the best I can do—is the story of the Dragon and how it was done to death by Coyote:

There had been a great landslide away down on the Columbia river, which had formed a great dam across the stream, a dam so high that the Salmon could no longer come up to the headwaters on his pilgrimages. The Salmon was sorry because he could not get up the stream and the people in the land of the Pend d'Oreilles—who were the cousins of the Flatheads and were of the Selish nation—were sorry because the Salmon came no more to visit them. And Coyote heard of the distress of the people and of the sorrow of the Salmon. The wisdom and the cleverness of Coyote were infinite and he came up the Columbia to remove the obstruction and to clear the stream for the Salmon's pilgrimage. He found the great dam that had been thrown across the river by the landslide and he struck it a mighty blow. The dam opened and let the water through. The way was clear for the Salmon.

Up the river came Coyote to tell the people what he had done and to see if the way were clear all the distance. Up the river he came to the Pend d'Oreille river, along the lake and up to the mouth of the Jocko, which is near where the town of Dixon stands now. The stream was open all the way and the Salmon could come up the river for his visit to the people in the Pend d'Oreille country. Coyote had opened the dam and had made the way easy.

By the mouth of the Jocko—which the Indians called Wild Plum creek—the Lark had her nest, where she stood watch over the entrance to the Jocko valley. Coyote saw the Lark in her nest and he stepped carefully so as not to harm her. His two front feet he lifted over her and she was not harmed. One hind foot passed and the Lark was not disturbed, but the second hind foot stepped upon the Lark's right leg and broke it. And the Lark cried aloud in pain and anger.

"I had a secret to tell you," she cried angrily, "but I will not tell you now, though it would save you from death. For you have hurt me."

Coyote had not meant to hurt the Lark and was sorry. He had, however, power which was almost infinite and he stroked the broken limb. Lo, as he rubbed it, the Lark's leg was made well and strong again and she sang with happiness.

"Now I will tell you the secret," said the Lark. And she told Coyote of a terrible Dragon, whose jaws were the bluffs tween Dixon and Ravalli, whose belly was the Jocko valley and whose tail was the canyon which is called the Coriacan defile and which reaches to De Smet, just west of Missoula.

This Dragon was powerful and he swallowed all who came that way. That he might not fall a victim to the Dragon's power, the Lark told Coyote the secret and told him how to guard himself against the strength of the monster.

The Dragon had the Grizzly Bear for a dog and nothing had escaped his might which had passed that way. There was one way by which Coyote might proceed and yet escape the dragon. "Listen," said the Lark, "and do as I tell you."

Even now there can be seen, growing along the Jocko, a tall weed which has a tough and stringy bark. From this weed the Indians used to make ropes which were strong like the hempen ropes of today. There are now old Indian women who know how to fashion strong ropes from this weed. And the Lark told Coyotte to make ropes of this weed and, as he traveled up the valley, to fasten them about his body, attaching the other ends to stumps and rocks and trees so that he could not be pulled from them.

And Coyote did as the Lark told him. Five ropes he made. As he moved up the Jocko he fastened them to the trees and the stumps and the rocks by the trail, fastening two before he loosened the others and moving slowly and with great caution all the way. Thus he advanced until he came to the bluffs which are two miles west of Ravalli.

As Coyote came to these bluffs, he felt a terrible wind. It was not so strong at first, but it became stronger with each gust and finally it was so fierce that it took Coyote off his feet and held him in the air. But his ropes which the Lark had told him to make held fast and Coyote was not dragged loose from his fastenings.

Again the wind blew and again the ropes held. A third time the wind swept Coyote from his feet and held him suspended in the air. But the third time the ropes held and Coyote was not blown away. He was sore with the strain and the ropes had cut him, but he was safe.

For the wind was caused by the breath of the Dragon as he sucked into his great jaws the air of the valley, breathing with such force that he drew in all that was before him. And in this way he had made captives of all the living things which came his way. But the ropes had saved Coyote and the Dragon was afraid for the first time. Here was a creature which he could not take. And he shut his jaws tight together lest Coyote should get inside. For he was fearful of this new creature which resisted his might.

Then Coyote slapped the jaws of the Dragon, slapped them hard till the sound of the blows echoed through the forest and through the valley. But the Dragon held his mouth shut until a blow struck him on the nose and made him sneeze. As the Dragon sneezed, Coyote leaped between his jaws and was upon the inside. And the Dragon was angry that he had had his jaws slapped and he closed his mouth upon Coyote, even though he was fearful that harm might come to him from this strange creature which had leaped in of his own desire.

When Coyote found himself in the Dragon's belly, which was the valley of the Jocko, he looked around to see what was there. He saw many creatures—the Deer, the Elk, the Moose and the Buffalo were there and the Trout and the Fly and the Gnat —all these and many others had been sucked in by the terrible breath of the Dragon and were prisoners in his belly. The Horse was there and the Louse and the Ant and all living things and they were all of the same size; the Ant was as large as the Deer and the Fly was great like the Moose. For that was the way they had been created and of that fashion were they when the Dragon captured them.

And Coyote noticed as he walked about, that the animals who were near the throat of the Dragon were all strong and active. Those which were farther down in the body of the beast were slow and stupid, while those which were near the tail were dead or were near to death.

When he had seen these things, Coyote went back to the animals which were yet strong and told them the things which he had seen. And he told them that they must kill the Dragon or they would all be dead, even as those which were crowded near the tail. And they asked Coyote how it could be done, for they were hopeless.

Coyote said that they must find the heart of the Dragon and must stab it as that was the only way they could kill him. And he set out to find the Dragon's heart.

Out in the Jocko valley, east of Arlee and between Arlee and the agency, there is a little butte, low and round. This was the heart of the Dragon and this Coyote found after he had searched. And he told the other animals what he had found. He bade them all give him their knives that he might cut down the heart of the Dragon. And he warned them that when they saw the heart fall they must rush for an opening. It must be everyone for himself and it must be done quickly, for the collapse of the great body of the Dragon would kill all who were caught within.

They gave their knives to Coyote and he attacked the heart of the Dragon. He stabbed it and slashed it until he saw it begin to yield to his attack. He shouted a warning for all to be ready for the rush, each one for himself. Then he stabbed it once more and the heart began to fall down. You can look at the butte in Jocko valley now and see how it flattened, for it was one time a rightly shaped heart.

As they heard the warning cry of Coyote, all the animals rushed to get out. Those who ran toward the mouth, the eyes and the ears of the Dragon found easy exit and were not crowded, for the Dragon opened his mouth in his agony when he felt his heart cut. And these animals got out without being crowded and are yet large, for they were not pressed. These are the Buffalo, the Moose and the Elk and their kind. The smaller animals, the Deer and the Beaver and the Goat, were crowded some and were squeezed and they are not as large as the Buffalo and the Moose and the Elk. But they escaped and were not pressed out of their original shape.

But the animals which ran toward the tail of the Dragon, which was the Coriacan defile, these were in great numbers and they were squeezed mightily. This is why the fish are small and why the Fly and the Gnat and the Wood Tick are tiny. They are those which were crowded most in the rush to escape.

All of the animals escaped and in safety, though some of them were crowded so that they became small. The Ant was the last one out. He did not get clear out before the body of the Dragon collapsed, so great was the crowding. The Ant was halfway out when the big body of the Dragon fell in. The Ant was caught in the middle of his body by the collapse and that is why he has such a small waist.

But the Dragon was slain and all the creatures save those that had died were released again upon the earth. Coyote had saved them, through the warning of the Lark. And when the Lark saw them coming back she was glad, for she loved Coyote; though he had broken her leg, yet he had made it well and strong again. And she sang the song of rejoicing which is the song which we hear her sing even now as the sun rises.

Two miles west of Ravalli there are high bluffs on each side of the Jocko as it flows toward the Pend d'Oreille, where the Lark had her nest. As he finished the story of the Dragon, Duncan McDonald paused to roll another cigarette. When he had it lighted, he blew a great cloud of smoke into the air and then looked down toward these bluffs.

"On the north side of the river there," he said, as he pointed to the height, "in the slide rock you can see the form of a man with a dog beside him. The head of the man is downward, the arms and legs are extended. This form has been on the rocks there, the Indians say, ever since Coyote killed the Dragon. It has been there ever since I was first told this story, 50 years ago. It was shadowy, but yet clearly traceable then, just as it is now. Since I have been here, it has not changed. And on the cliff on the other side of the river, which we cannot see from here, there is the same figure in the rock which lies there. It is the monument of the Dragon and his dog."

Lazily the breeze ruffled the leaves above our heads; the subdued ripple of the Jocko made soft music at our feet. The birds sang their summer afternoon song, a crooning lullaby it seemed; the drone of the insects had not ceased. A trout leaped from the stream after a fly that had ventured too close to the riffles. There was a splash as it struck the water again. And Duncan McDonald looked up.

"All these living things," said he, "would not be here if Coyote had not saved them from the Dragon. He was a great friend for the Indian. He did many things for the Red Man. He taught him all he knew about woodcraft and he provided him with the string for his bow that he might shoot strongly; he gave him the flint for his arrow points that his shots might kill. He stocked the streams with fish and he saved the animals of the forest that the Indian might have the game to hunt.

"The Indian has many stories of Coyote and everywhere in the Selish country there are traces of what he did. The old Indian used to tell these stories about the campfires; some of them could tell them like actors. The stories were handed down from generation to generation and there are many points of resemblance between these tales and the mythology of the old Greeks. The Indians, too, have some legends which are similar to the stories in the Bible.

"It is strange where some of them had their origin. The Indians think that theirs are the original tales and that the others were borrowed from them. I cannot tell where they came from. But they are tribal history and in old days they were carefully taught to the younger boys that they might not be lost. But lately this has not been done and in another generation there will not be many of them left. The young Indians do not know them now. It is too bad they cannot be preserved."

Down the valley, where Coyote met the Lark and received the warning which made it possible for him to redeem the beautiful valley of the Jocko from the horrible Dragon, the Northern Pacific's eastbound express whistled for Dixon station. The echoes of the shriek of the locomotive rang back and forth between the walls which had thrown back the death cry of the Dragon, ages ago, as the living animals sprang forth from their living tomb. My train was coming and soon I would be speeding along through the valley which had been the scene of the death struggle. It was a rude awakening. My happy afternoon was ended. Duncan McDonald rose from his heels, upon which he had been sitting through the long session. We shook hands. "Some day," he said, "I must tell you other stories of Coyote." How well he kept that promise, perhaps another of the Old Trail stories will one day tell. Coyote deserves to be preserved in black and white now that the Indian no longer passes down the tales to his son.

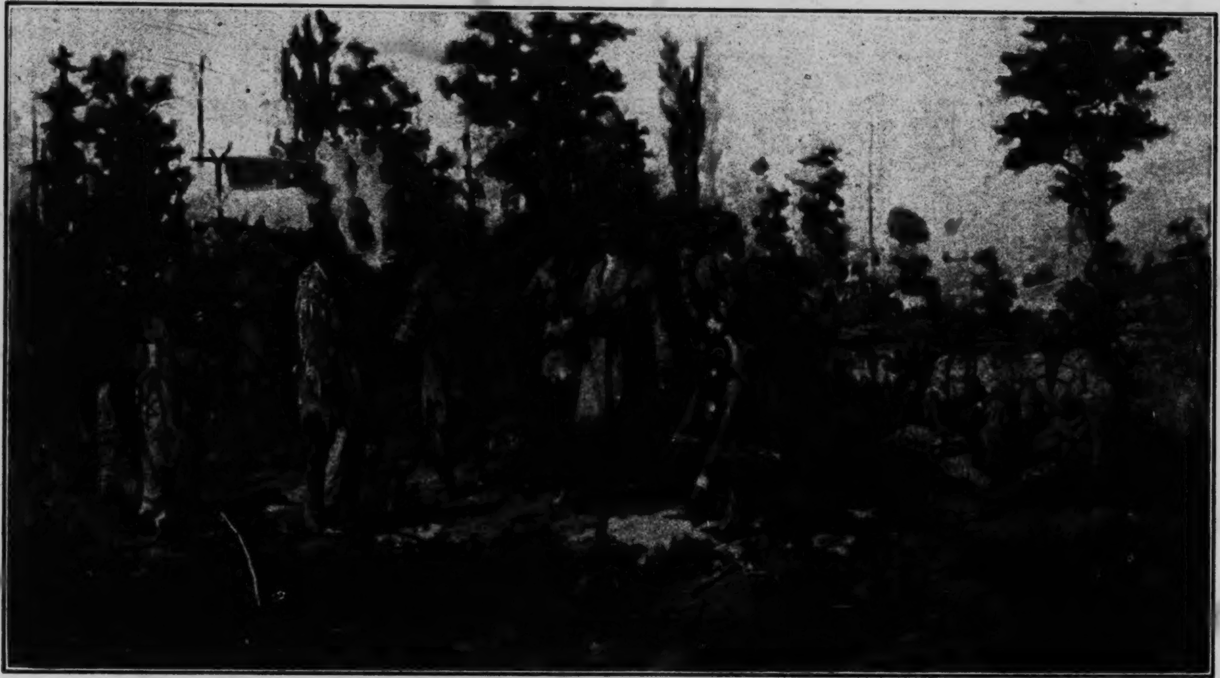
December 16, 1911.

MONTANA'S FIRST CHRISTMAS

FOR nearly eighty miles after it emerges from Hell Gate canyon, the Missoula river skirts the base of the Bitter Root mountains, gaining in volume and in picturesqueness as it receives accessions from the hundred tributaries which emerge from the rocky rifts in the magnificent chain of peaks which tower above it, until its current blends with the sparkling flow of the St. Regis de Borgia. The beautiful stream here becomes more beautiful and changes its course from the general westerly direction which it has followed, turning almost at right angles and, with accelerated speed, dashing through a narrow box canyon for twenty miles. In this canyon the river pours over tempestuous precipices, plunges between rocky walls—foaming, seething swirling—for nearly the entire distance. Then its bed broadens; it flows between fertile fields; it becomes a placid, almost mirror-like river. It debouches into the beauty of Paradise valley—rightly named if ever spot upon earth were rightly named.

Here, in the midst of the beauty of Paradise valley, the Missoula mingles its waters with those of the Pend d'Oreille or Lower Flathead, whose flow here is mighty mild, whose color is either blue or green, according to the point of view, but always brilliant. The union of these splendid streams gives the Clark's Fork of the Columbia, through which the drainage of the western slope of Montana finds its way into the Pacific ocean. This, to my mind, is one of the beauty-spots of Montana. It is a glorious place. The mountain background is rugged and substantial. Great shoulders of naked rock jut out from the somber green cloak of pine which covers the slopes and silver streams form shining threads all through the fabric. Broad benches slope away from the abrupt sides of the hills and, in turn, pitch—often suddenly—down to the level of the meadows which skirt the streams. There are groups of deciduous trees upon the benches; there are tall grass and brilliant flowers in the summer time. In the winter the snow banks high upon the mountain slopes; there is a considerable depth upon the bench lands. But the valley is not often snowbound. It is like spring there, always.

It appears to be a correct statement that the first buildings



Lewis and Clark at Lolo Creek

—Painting by Paxson.

erected by white men in the territory included in the present boundaries of Montana were constructed in the spring of 1813 at the point of land between these two rivers. The builder was Factor McMillan of the Astor fur-traders, who had been sent inland from Astoria to establish trade relations with the Flatheads, after the arrival of the good ship Beaver at the mouth of the old trading post built here, but we have an accurate and detailed account of the life at the post and there can be no reasonable doubt of its authenticity. The records of the fur company establish the fact that the post was constructed there; it was known as McMillan's trading post. A book, published in England in 1817, "Cox's Adventures on the Columbia River," furnishes a really graphic description of the happenings at McMillan's post during the sojourn of the writer at that place. Also, the Flatheads tell of the coming of McMillan. For years, before he came, the Flatheads had been getting the worst of it in their annual engagements with the Blackfeet, the latter having been able to obtain rifles and ammunition from the Missouri river nomadic traders, while the Flatheads were yet primitively armed. The advent of McMillan brought a supply of arms and powder which restored the prestige of the west-slope Indians and enabled them to wreak vengeance upon their foes, for—on equal footing—they were better fighters and braver men than their eastside enemies. So their tribal records show the turn of the tide in their warfare when McMillan came.

We may, then, assume the correctness of the statement that the first buildings erected in Montana by white men were those which McMillan constructed at the mouth of the Missoula river. Their site was, later, the western boundary of the Flathead Indian reservation. It had for years been one of the meeting places for council among the Pend d'Oreilles. The Upper Pend d'Oreilles spent most of their time in the Moiese valley; they were "horse" Indians and possessed great herds. The Lower Pend d'Oreilles had their headquarters in the Plains valley; they were "canoe" Indians and subsisted mainly upon fish. They seldom joined in the expeditions to the buffalo country. They obtained their skins by trading; they were not good riders. But they were great trappers and their store of beaver and mink and other desired pelts was great. They were wealthy and, of all the Selish tribes, they had suffered less in warfare than the others, on account of their comparative remoteness from the Blackfeet's country.

Cox, the young Englishman who wrote the book which has been mentioned, was a cabin passenger on the Astor ship Beaver. Upon his arrival at Astoria, he was placed in command of an expedition which was ordered to proceed to McMillan's post with a general stock of trading supplies, to replenish the post and to bring back the furs taken in trade from the Indians. The journey to the mouth of the Missoula was made without incident, except that the party was hard put for meat and was forced to kill some of its horses. There was a brief pause in the Spokane country, but no other stop was made on the march. Cox had received instructions from the head of the fur company at Astoria which ordered him, in case he was forced to kill any of his horses, to select the poor ones for slaughter. In his reminiscences, Cox admits that he disregarded this order and, when a horse was butchered, it was one of the best-conditioned in the bunch. He didn't think emanciated steeds would make good eating. Aside from the horse meat diet, there was nothing on the journey to cause any discomfort.

It was the day before Christmas, 1813, when Cox and his party arrived at the mouth of the Missoula river and presented their credentials to the factor at McMillan's post. The buildings of the post consisted of a good trading store, a comfortable house for the trader, his clerks and assistants. Here Cox and his companions established themselves for the winter.

A night's rest under roof was agreeable to the travelers and they rose on Christmas morning, refreshed and ready for the celebration of the day. They had not lost track of the date and their English habits called for a proper observance of the holiday, even though they were in a wilderness and in a land where Christmas was then unknown and unrecognized. It was a queer setting for a Christmas celebration—strange, indeed, to the men from England and the Atlantic states. But they had the Christmas spirit and they had brought with them, also, some of the Christmas spirits which were in those days considered an indispensable feature to the celebration of the great holiday. They were cheerful over their successful completion of the long march through the forests and the snug cabin furnished a delightful contrast to the tent shelter which had been their protection during the weeks of their slow journey. The glow of the McMillan fire was enough to compensate for the absence of some of the features of the Christmas celebration to which they had been accustomed all their lives and they proceeded to make the most of the material at hand and to crowd all the cheer possible into the day.

Not long ago, I looked over the valley at the confluence of the rivers and thought of that Christmas celebration of so many years gone. It seemed to me then that the first Christmas celebration in Montana must have been a jolly affair. Certainly there could be no finer setting for such an event. The valley with its background of pine-clad hills, with its rivers and its broad meadows, with all its natural beauty and with the pleasant associations furnished by the permanent shelter and the warm fire—the valley on that Christmas morning almost one hundred years ago, must have been a place indeed in which to observe the Christmas holiday. I could imagine the complete satisfaction which Cox must have felt in sleeping under a roof, even if that roof were in an entirely new place and amid surroundings which were strange to him.

Montana is so new that we don't often have an opportunity to write or to talk of events more than fifty years removed. So this Christmas of within two years of a century ago is a novel theme. This was almost forty years before the Jesuit missionaries came to Montana with the true message of Christmas. Possibly there was a Bible in the McMillan camp, but it isn't likely that it entered to any great extent into that first Christmas celebration. There is, I take it, a distinction between an observance and a celebration, and the affair at McMillan's camp was probably a celebration. We know that rum played an important part in the program, though it was not, evidently, conspicuous enough to cause the celebration to become anything like an orgy as far as the white men were concerned. Cox, in his book, tells us enough about that celebration to warrant the belief that the day was orderly.

When Cox and his companions reached the fort, they found a great camp of Indians there. These were warriors of the Flathead tribes who had just come back from the buffalo country where they got a lot of hides and won a decided victory over the Blackfeet, thus avenging a disastrous defeat of the year before. They had brought back a lot of Blackfeet captives, men and women. The Flatheads had been in camp there for a few days when Cox came with supplies to replenish the depleted stock of McMillan. It was a welcome arrival on that account, as the tobacco had been entirely exhausted and the Indians had learned to like the weed. It was a coincidence that shaped matters so that the Flatheads had planned the torture of their prisoners—for Christmas day. That they were persuaded from carrying out in full their program of torture, is what makes me believe that the whites did not dip too deeply into the rum.

The hunters had brought in some mountain sheep for the feast of the day and there had been a general distribution of tobacco. From his private store Cox supplied a sack of flour, a sack of rice, a generous supply of tea and coffee, some arrowroot and fifteen gallons of prime rum. Here was the material for the Christmas celebration as Cox had planned it. But he had arrived only the night before and he did not realize, as he made his program that Christmas morning, the influence which the Indians would have in upsetting his arrangements. Their enthusiasm came, but from their joy over their victory and their elation over the prospect of a sufficient supply of rifles and bullets to repeat the defeat of the Blackfeet upon the occasion of the next journey across the range. They had many defeats and indignities to

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avenge, and it was their nature and their practice to make the torture of their captives atone for many of the humiliations which had been forced upon them. Indeed, the captives expected nothing else, for they had tortured Flatheads and they knew that torture was the inevitable sequel to capture.

In his book, to which reference has already been made, Cox describes the remarkable experiences of that first Montana Christmas. He tells how his expected pleasure was spoiled by the Indians. It is best to quote his words; they are graphic. He says: "We spent a comparatively happy Christmas, and by the side of a blazing fire in a warm room, forgot the sufferings we had endured in our dreary progress through the woods. There was, however, in the midst of our festivities a great drawback from the pleasure we should otherwise have enjoyed. I allude to the unfortunate Blackfeet who had been captured by the Flatheads. Having been informed that they were about putting one of their prisoners to death, I went to their camp to witness the spectacle. The man was tied to a tree, after which they heated an old barrel of a gun until it became red hot, with which they burned him on the legs, thighs, neck, cheeks and stomach. Then they commenced cutting the flesh from about the nails, which they pulled out, and next separated the fingers from the hand, joint by joint. During the performance of these cruelties, the wretched captive never winced and, instead of suing for mercy, he added fresh stimulant to their barbarous ingenuity by the most irritating reproaches, part of which our interpreter translated as follows: 'My heart is strong; you do not hurt me; you cannot hurt me; you are fools; you do not know how to torture; try it again; I do not feel any pain yet. We torture your relatives much better, because we make them cry out loud like little children. You are not brave; you have small hearts; you are afraid to fight.'

"Then, addressing one Flathead in particular, the captive said: 'It was by my arrow that you lost your eye.' Upon which the Flathead darted at him and in a moment with a sharp knife scooped out one of his eyes, at the same time cutting the bridge of his nose almost in two. This did not stop him; with his remaining eye he looked sternly at another and said: 'I killed your brother and I scalped your fool of a father.' The warrior to whom this was addressed instantly sprang at him and separated the scalp from his head. He was then about to plunge a knife into his heart when he was told by the chief to desist. The raw skull, the bloody eyesocket and the mutilated nose presented a horrible appearance, but by no means changed his note of defiance.

"'It was I,' said he, addressing the chief, 'that made your wife a prisoner last fall—we put out her eyes, we tore out her tongue, we treated her like a dog.' The chief became incensed the moment his wife's name was mentioned; he seized his gun and, before the last sentence was ended, a ball from it passed through the brave fellow's heart and terminated his sufferings. Shocking, however, as this dreadful exhibition was, it was far exceeded by the atrocious cruelties practiced upon the female prisoners. We remonstrated against such horrible cruelties. They responded by saying the Blackfeet treated their prisoners in the same manner; that it was the course adopted by all red warriors and they could not think of giving up the gratification of their revenge to the foolish and womanish feelings of white men.

"Shortly after this, we observed a young female led forth, apparently not more than fourteen or fifteen years of age, surrounded by some old women, who were conducting her to one end of the village, whither they were followed by a number of young men. Learning of their intentions to torture this young girl, we renewed our remonstrances but received nearly the same answer as before. Finding them still inflexible and wishing to adopt every means in our power consistent with safety, in the cause of humanity, we ordered our interpreter to acquaint them that, highly as we valued their friendship and much as we esteemed their furs, we would quit their country forever unless they discontinued their unmanly and disgraceful cruelties to their prisoners. This had the desired effect and the miserable captive was led back to her sorrowing group of friends. Our interference was nearly rendered ineffectual by the furious old priestesses who had been conducting her to the sacrifice. They told the young warriors they were cowards, fools and had not the hearts of fleas, and called on them in the names of their sisters, mothers and wives to follow the steps of their forefathers and have their revenge on the dogs of Blackfeet. They began to waver, but we affected not to understand what the old woman had been saying. We told them that this act of self-denial on their part was particularly grateful to the white men and by it they would secure our permanent residence among them and, in return for their furs, they would be furnished with guns and ammunition sufficient to repel the attacks of their old enemies and preserve their relatives from being made prisoners. This decided the doubtful and the chief promised faithfully that no more tortures would be inflicted upon the prisoners, which I believe was rigidly adhered to, at least during the winter of 1813."

Thus there was something of the real spirit of Christmas in the first Montana celebration, after all. Cox appears to have acquired some influence over the Flatheads by his square dealing with them. Later in that winter, he persuaded the war chief to return a party of Blackfeet men and women to their own country. The captives were furnished with horses and dried meat—for which Cox paid—and were told to go home. The Blackfeet did not understand it, but they went. The Flatheads were not enthusiastic over the decision of the chief, but they wanted to be sure of their supply of arms and ammunition and they did not dare to antagonize the men who furnished them. The first lesson in forbearance was thus taught to the Flatheads on this Christmas day, 98 years ago.

This is a strange story—this tale of the first white Christmas in Montana—but it is vouched for by records which are unimpeachable. The site of the old McMillan post is all that remains. The last vestige of the ruins of those old log cabins has disappeared. The Flatheads have lost even their tribal relations now. But the two great rivers yet mingle their waters in Paradise valley. And the lesson of peace and good will is better understood than it was on that far-back Christmas day when a young Englishman sought to teach it to the Indians of the wilderness and succeeded to a degree which is surprising when we consider the conditions which attended the effort. I have no doubt that, though he had been shocked, he enjoyed his Montana Christmas dinner all the more for having exercised the Christmas spirit. Thinking it over, I am inclined to recall what I said about this incident and to speak of Cox's Christmas as an observance, after all, and not as a celebration.

December 23, 1911.

THE CALL OF THE WEST

WHAT is the call of the west? We have all felt it and we shall all feel it again if, by any chance, we are separated again from the west for any considerable length of time. It is irresistible, we know that, and it is stronger if one has once been of the west a part, even if a small part, but it is not to be described. It is homesickness, to be sure, but it is such a homesickness as nobody knows who has not had a home in the west, who has not made friends of its mountains, who has not gained terms of intimacy with its streams, who has not been accepted as a comrade by its valleys. We have all experienced homesickness, but the longing for the west is something stronger than just that. Think how many people you have known who thought they were tired of the west and tried to live back east. Think, then, how few of them succeeded. The call of the west brought them back. It does it now and it did the same thing fifty years ago. The west has claimed many of the best men and women of the east, but the east has robbed us of very few of our own people. I have been reading, lately, the stories of some of our older Montanans. The experiences of some of them have inspired the thought here expressed—there is no call like the call of the west. Witness the story of Major Bill Doney of Yamhill as an instance—an instance that is often repeated in the stories of the men and women who have been coming west for half a century, who have thought they didn't like the west and then have returned east only to find that their affection for the western country was too strong to be disregarded.

The story of Major Bill Doney and the trails he traversed is not unusual. In my experience and in my acquaintance it has been duplicated many times. So it has in yours, each one of you. But I have taken it as a type because I know Major Bill pretty well and because he is known to so many of the people who read these old trail stories. He came west first in 1865, did Major Bill, and he returned almost at once from Denver. But he was back again in 1867, this time in Montana. And it was not a Pullman car trip back and forth in those days—it was walk, every step of the rough way, walk and take the dust of a team of oxen, shuffling along over the plains trail. Major Bill thought he didn't like the west, but even the crude west of 1865 called so strongly that he came back as soon as he could—came back through the most perilous conditions that the plains' trails knew, fighting Indians nearly all the way, risking life and all else, just for the sake of being in the west again.

And Major Bill learned his lesson sooner than some of them did. The second time he got out west, he stayed. Almost all the time he has been in Montana; once he went down into Utah for a while to help finish the Union Pacific construction and to assist in driving the golden spike at Promontory point; then he came back and since then he has been in western Montana; is yet placer mining on Gold creek, the stream where the first colors were found in Montana. You couldn't drag him east with an ox-team like one of those he drove back and forth across the plains before he became convinced that the west called more strongly than any other place on earth.

Major Bill was christened William J. Doney. He was born back in Illinois in 1842. He was taken to Wisconsin as a boy and lived there until 1865, when he first heard the call of the west. He responded and got a job as bullwhacker on the old Kansas trail. He followed his plodding oxen all the weary miles between the Missouri and Denver. He spent the summer in the Colorado country, but the approach of autumn found him getting homesick for the Wisconsin forests, and he took his old job and tramped back with the oxen to the river which was then the line of embarkation for passengers in the fleet of prairie schooners which for years dotted the great plains. It was a long, slow journey, but home was at the end of it, and the young man plodded on, content in the realization that each step took him nearer to the place where he wanted to be.

He thought it was the place where he wanted to be. But when he got to the Wisconsin woods again, they didn't seem like the forests he had left. Their charm was gone; something had come into his life that had broken the spell. Overpowering his homesickness was that insistent call of the west, that call which reminded him constantly of the region whose acquaintance he had formed and which had won his allegiance, all unconsciously to himself. There are many of us who have shared this experience. There has been at times a longing for the old home; when we have been able to satisfy that longing, how different things have seemed from the memories we had cherished and how much more beautiful, how much more satisfactory the west has appeared when viewed from that distance. And how readily we have come back, glad that we might return, contented that we were of the west and that the west was ours.

One season in Wisconsin served to convince Major Bill that he had made a mistake and the early spring of 1867 found him hunting a job as bullwhacker again on a westward trail. The tide of emigration that season had set in toward the rich diggings of western Montana, and it was upon that tide that Doney embarked, again swinging a whip over the backs of an oxteam. For the third time he plodded over the trail across the plains and presently the Rocky mountains loomed ahead, the goal for which he was headed, the realm which he was never again to forsake, the region which was to be his home for life. Now, as he nears the three-score-and-ten mark in his life's journey, he is yet in the heart of those mountains, contented and happy, washing gold in the old diggings of Yamhill.

That third trip across the plains was no pleasure-jaunt. There were skirmishes with the Indians almost from the time the outfit left the Missouri river behind. It was a bad year, anyway. The plains Indians were irritable and hostile; they feared the result of the completion of the new railway; they hated the race which was building it; they sought to prevent by their guerilla warfare the advance of the white line. More and more threatening became the reds and, at the western border of Nebraska, almost in Wyoming—it was at a little settlement known as Castle Pool—the outfit with which Doney was traveling was held back for ten days by the fighting ahead, in which government troops were engaged in the attempt to drive back the reds and to teach them to behave themselves. The troops succeeded in forcing a surrender of the hostile band and the outfit was allowed to proceed.

Some of the drivers had deserted earlier in the trip; others refused to proceed from Castle Pool. The number of bullwhackers was reduced one-half but Doney was one of those who stayed with the job. He had double work to do for the remainder of the trip, but he stuck. The call of the west was stronger than the fear of the Indians. And so Major Bill came to Montana. He came through a shower of arrows and a rain of lead, but he got through safely and he has never been sorry that he came.

Major Doney's introduction to Montana was at Bannack. He arrived in the lively old mining camp—then young—October 3, 1867. Bannack had yielded her supremacy at that time to Virginia City and, after a fortnight in the old placer diggings, Doney moved on to the newer ones in Alder gulch. The dust was being taken from the rich bars which Fairweather, Edgar and their companions had found, being taken in quantities which made the old gulch the marvel of the world. But there seemed to be no new ground and the only opening which presented itself to the new arrival was a job at day-wages and he wasn't quite satisfied with that.

Making inquiry as to what else there was in Montana, the major learned about Bozeman, then a little trading and farming town, and over into the Gallatin valley he went to see what the offering of that region might be. It was not altogether an encouraging field for the ambitious young man at that season of the year; the movement of overland travel had ceased for the year and the farming was all done; the placer miners were entering upon their season of comparative idleness and the demand for the farm products was light. About a month spent in Bozeman satisfied Doney that the Gallatin country was great in possibilities but that there was nothing there that would pay his board for the winter. So he hiked westward over the range to Missoula, riding horseback.

Christmas day, 1867, Major Bill had his first glimpse of Missoula. "It wasn't very much of a place when I came to it that Christmas day," said the major, as he related his story to me the other day. "There were two stores and a hotel besides the Missoula mills and the few houses that had been built for the folks who started the town. But there was more in Missoula in the way of winter employment than there had been anywhere else that I had visited and I stayed in Missoula all that winter. It was good to me, Missoula was, and I have always liked it ever since then."

The spring of 1868 led Major Bill to the Pioneer district, which has since become his permanent home. He rode up from Missoula to Henderson gulch, where he looked over the ground. Hearing of other diggings, he went over past Bear gulch to Maginnis gulch on the Blackfoot side of the range. There was nothing there which appealed to him and he saddled again to take the trail, this time riding over into Madison county again, the camp at Sheridan being his objective point. In Sheridan he became acquainted with a couple of young fellows about his own age and they persuaded him to join them in a trip down into Utah.

"That trip to Utah," says Major Doney, "was the hardest journey I ever made. It was worse than the time we came across the plains, dodging Indians all the way. We got along all right until we entered the Soda Springs mountain region and there we lost our way entirely. For three days and nights we were as completely lost as any three fellows ever were. We wandered back and forth, looking for some landmark that we might recognize but we didn't see a single place that looked natural until, all at once, we came out at Soda Springs. There we were able to get something to eat and we were put on the right trail. It was late in the fall of 1868 and those nights in the hills without anything to eat were cold and discouraging. But we were all right as soon as we got something to eat and we didn't have any more trouble on the trip."

The travelers made short stays in Cache valley and at Salt Lake and then went to work on the construction of the Union Pacific, which was then nearing its completion. All through the winter Doney worked on the railway building. He quit the job in May, 1869, just a week before the golden spike was driven, and he went into Promontory with the big crowd to witness the official completion of the first transcontinental line.

"That was the toughest, wildest crowd I ever saw," says the major, describing his adventures in helping the Oakes Ames folks to get their big job finished. "Two big gangs had been working, one eastward and the other westward, and there were 30,000 graders turned loose all at once when the two lines met. All of these men had been paid off. The golden spike driving had been well advertised and every crook and sure-thing man west of the Mississippi had moved to Promontory to have a share in picking the rich profits that were supposed to be there. No mining camp that I ever saw could compare in toughness with Promontory when we graders got there. It was a crude, shack town—but it was wide open night and day. There was every form of gambling that could be thought of; there was one continuous round of noise and hurrah. The sure-thing games were not fast enough for some of the thugs and they robbed the paid-off men whenever they got them in singles, killing them if they couldn't get the money any other way. This was the only town I was ever in where they 'had a man for breakfast every morning.' I had heard of such places but this was the only one I ever saw. And one was enough. When the spike was driven, the crowd vanished. Promontory had had its day."

Major Bill was fortunate in being permitted to play the role of observer during his sojourn in the temporary town. He escaped the holdups and was not attacked by the thugs. When the big event had been pulled off, he and his two companions, who had stuck together during all the excitement, began to think again of Montana. They had saved a little money and they started north again from Ogden, in a spring wagon, driving one good team of horses and leading another. They hadn't been molested by the thieves while in Promontory, but no sooner had they hit the trail than their led team was stolen.

They discovered the theft in time to locate the trail of the thieves and they lost no time in taking up the pursuit. The chase was lively but the thieves were run down after a couple of days and the horses were recovered without a fight. There was no attempt to bring the thieves to justice. The conditions were such that it would have been useless. The young men were glad to get their horses back and were well satisfied as they turned their faces once more toward Montana with their possessions all intact. The trip north was made without further incident and Major Bill found himself in Bannack again in the fall of 1869.

That winter Major Bill spent his time around Virginia City and Henry's Lake, Idaho. The next spring he went to Butte, passing through the lively placer camp at Silver Bow. At Butte, he found occupation at odd jobs that kept him busy until summer, when he went to Deer Lodge City, where he lived for a year. His principal source of income during this year was catching fish; he fished in Warm Springs creek, above where Anaconda now stands, as far as Silver lake. It was good fishing and Major Bill's trout were one of the things that made the old Scott house famous in Deer Lodge and among passengers on the old stagecoach trail. During that summer he also found employment with Black & Morgan, the firm that had the contract for the construction of the federal prison, now the state penitentiary, in Deer Lodge.

In the fall of 1870, Major Bill came down Hell Gate as far as where Clinton now stands. There he remained until March, 1871, when he went to Yamhill on Gold creek and there he has made his home ever since. The summer of 1885 he spent on Flathead lake and the summer of 1891 he was in the vicinity of Ovando. Aside from these visits, he has been steadily at Yamhill, placer mining and freighting, satisfied that he has found the place he sought in all his wanderings. When he located at Yamhill, that camp and Pike's Peak, its rival, were flourishing placer camps. Pioneer, below, had a population of about 1,500 and was prosperous and lively. These towns have had their day; the gold has been washed from the bars and Major Doney and the few others who remain are washing, washing, washing—keeping up the old occupation and finding recompense in the dust which the gravel yet yields to their persistent effort.

In the autumn of 1883, Major Bill participated in the driving of another golden spike; he was one of the throng which gathered at Gold Creek station to witness the completion of another trail of steel across the country. The driving of that spike made possible the movement of steam-driven trains along the trail which he had so often traveled afoot or on horseback. The day of the pioneer was passing to make way for a new era and Major Bill retired to the Yamhill diggings.

For a good many years, Major Bill has lived in one of the buildings which are a part of the faded glory of Yamhill. Last summer, he built a new house for himself and he has torn down the old one. He is planning for many pleasant years in the new home and there is nothing to indicate that he will not be spared to realize his expectations. He is active yet; there are not many men of fifty who are as spry as he. His air castles are modest structures and his dreams are rose-tinted only to a mild degree. But he possesses, undimmed, the spirit of the Argonauts and it burns strongly within him. The days ahead are as bright for him as were those days ahead which he could see when he first responded to the call of the west.

O, the call of the west! Gentle, insistent, irresistible. Verily, he who answers it finds what man has sought for long centuries of quest—that eternal youth which manifests itself in the firm tread, the bright glance and the clear tones of the man whose years are three-score but who is seventy years young. O, call of the west! He who answers it does not always find the pot of gold at the rainbow's foot, but he finds what is better—he comes into possession of the companionship of the mountains, the comradeship of the streams, the intimate society of the valleys of the grandest home that God made for man. O, call of the west! Who shall say that Major Bill has not found happiness as great and comfort as enduring as any of his comrades of 1865 who gather their gold from bond-coupons while he gets his from washing, washing, washing the dust from the gravel at Yamhill? O, call of the west; seductive, alluring, sweet. We who have answered you have come into a kingdom, the full glory and happiness of which cannot be comprehended by those who have heard you not. There is much in the story of Major Bill—plain and simple as it is—which will not appeal to the man of the east. But we of the west can read between the lines.

December 30, 1911.

ABORIGINAL HORSETRADERS

THERE are a good many of the things which we count as our resources which the Indians overlooked during the ages-long period when they were the unchallenged lords of this vast, rich northwest. There were many of the endowments of this region which they disregarded entirely, but the rich blue-joint grass of these western Montana valleys was not one of them. The Indians well knew the value of the forage which grows here now and which grew here then. Their cattle were sleekest, their horses were strongest and fleetest. The stock which was raised by the Selish tribes was in demand by all the tribes. Those who were strong enough came over and stole the horses they wanted; those who were not able to steal, traded when they could. But the horses of the western Montana valleys were the best horses known in the northwest, even before the white man came and improved their breeding.

The Flatheads in the Bitter Root valley were rich in horses. So were their cousins, the Pend d'Oreilles of the Mission valley, and their other relatives, the Nez Perces, whose home was on the west side of the Bitter Root mountains in the rich meadows of the Coeur d'Alene and the Clearwater. The earliest white men to enter this region found great herds of fine horses in these valleys. Some of the Indians were owners of thousands. It was not always the chiefs who were richest in horseflesh. The leadership of the Selish tribes was not bartered. It was usually a hereditary honor and the positions of war chiefs were determined by personal valor. The acquisition of these herds by some of the members of the western tribes appears to indicate that there are Rockefellers in every race and Morgans among every people, who attain fortunes at the expense of their fellows, whether wealth be measured by the standard of dollars, of horses or of clam-shells.

Some of these wealthy Indians, perhaps, secured their fortunes by trading. Others, unquestionably, gave some attention to the breeding of their stock. But the great fortunes in Indian horseflesh were made by gambling, for the Indians were always willing to bet themselves naked on the result of a horserace and many a herd has been doubled through the winning of a contest of this sort. In an earlier trail story I have told of the heavy wagers made upon a race between Indian women on the "Course du Femmes," near Arlee. Then there were raids in which the Flatheads were the aggressors and which increased the size of their herds through acquisitions from the Crows and the Blackfeet. There were get-rich-quick plans among the aborigines no less bold than those of today and certainly not as questionable.

The richest of the Indians of this region were the Nez Perces. The same reason which had prevented their decimation in warfare protected their herds from the east-side raiders—the geography of the situation was such as to make it almost impossible for the Blackfeet to reach the Nez Perces when they came west for war or robbery or for both; the lands of the Selish lay close to the west slopes of the main divide, while the Nez Perces were further protected by the high wall of the Bitter Root range. The Flatheads in the Bitter Root valley had fine herds and some specially good individual animals. The Upper Pend d'Oreilles, whose range was between Missoula and Flathead lake, had also some excellent animals. Each tribe was proud of its herds, though the ownership was private, and each would back to the limit the racers of its braves. Next to the winning of a battle, the tribal instinct was strongest in a contest on the racecourse. Sometimes, it is true, warfare developed in a contest on the racetrack. But, as a rule, the Indians were good losers—they were real sports.

With the coming of the whites, the Indians found added opportunity for trading in horses and, later, when the real immigration set in and the travelers to the north-Pacific coast passed through this region and the country to the south, they began to acquire cattle in addition to their original horses. The stock which the immigrants drove or led often became footsore and unable to travel and the Indians picked up many good bargains in this way. They were shrewd traders and he was a mighty fortunate immigrant who got the better of them on a horse trade or any other deal.

When Governor Stevens left Lieutenant Mullan in the Bitter Root valley to survey a possible overland road through this mountain region, he left with him a considerable band of horses. Later, when Lieutenant Mullan began the construction of the famous trail which bears his name, he had large herds of stock which he recuperated and wintered in the Bitter Root and its neighboring valleys. Baron O'Keeffe and his brother David came to this valley and had their attention directed to its fertility through having charge of one of Mullan's winter herds. From these herds the Indian stockmen succeeded in getting some good blood to breed with that of their own animals. They were ever alert to grab a bargain.

"Nobody ever traded quickly with an Indian," said Judge Woody to me the other day, "and this was specially true when they were bartering for horses. They traded deliberately and with solemnity as if they were debating questions of state. A horse-trade was carried through with all the formality of a council. There were two or three pipes smoked over every horse that was swapped and there was any amount of parley with each pipe smoked. The Flatheads had a great many buckskins; these were tough horses and were in demand. When they bought up a bunch of horses for trade or for sale, they always showed the poorest one first. They would haggle over the price to be paid for this animal until they had forced it up as high as they thought they could get it. Then they would close the deal and would bring in a horse that was a little better than the first. The start in the negotiations would be made at the figure received for the poorer animal and would be boosted as high as the patience of the white man would stand. This concluded, there would be a better horse trotted out. This performance would be repeated as long as the Indians had any horses left. The Indian usually got the price he wanted. Time was no object to him and the white man was usually in a hurry."

The Nez Perces had, as I have said, the largest herds of the Indians of this region. Five Crows, one of the Nez Perce chiefs, had four thousand horses. Reuben, another Nez Perce who was locally famous, had nearly six thousand in his herds. In these herds, the finest horses were big, rangy roans. There were some exceptionally fine animals in these bands. The roans came from some horses that were brought from the coast by the Nez Perces, obtained by trade and otherwise from the Umatillas and other tribes on the salt water, who had secured them in their southern raids, getting them from the Mexican and Spanish stockmen in California. There was better size to these animals than to some of the others and the Nez Perce herds were the envy of their neighbors.

"These big herds were handled upon practically the same system which was later adopted by the white stockmen of the ranges," said Judge Woody when I asked him about some of the details of the old Indian horse business. "They were cut up into small bands and assigned to different ranges. The owners had riders who looked after the separated bands in a general sort of way. The roundup was an Indian feature, too. Occasionally, the entire holdings of a big Indian would be assembled. I suppose this was as often for the purpose of making a demonstration as for the need of finding out how many there were."

The introduction of the better-bred horses came, as I have said, through the acquisition of footsore stock from the immigrants who could not afford to spend on the trail the time which was necessary for the recuperation of the trail-worn animals. The Indians and the white traders would take these foot-sore animals and turn them into the meadows in western Montana and in a few weeks the hoofs would grow out and the stock would be fat and as good as ever. In this way some really fine stock was brought into the country.

In this way, also, the Indians obtained cattle. Draught oxen and milch cows wore out on the long tramp over the plains. Some of the Hudson Bay company's men saw the possibilities which lay in this situation and entered into the trading business for themselves in preference to continuing with the company. Neil MacArthur, who was well known in western Montana and Idaho, was one of these. He became a successful stockman and freighter through his enterprise in this direction. Fort Hall in Idaho was a favorite trading point. It was on the old Oregon trail and there the travelers usually rested after their journey across the plains and before entering upon the trip through the mountains. Here many good animals were picked up and sent into the Bitter Root valley.

It seems strange, but it is vouched for as a fact by oldtimers, that the Indians were exceedingly fond of milk and when they began to acquire cows as a part of their stock holdings, they reveled in the luxury. The squaws, of course, had to do the milking. They had their own method for performing this operation, as they had for doing everything else which they undertook.

"When a squaw went to milk," said Judge Woody, continuing his description, "she wouldn't touch a cow until the hind legs of the animal were tied. This, of course, was to prevent the cow from kicking and it might have been necessary at first. But when the cows got used to the squaws and the latter got used to the cows there was nothing to indicate that it was anything more than a habit. The tying was a mere formality. The bit of rope would be loosely thrown around the hind legs of the cow and the creature would stand as quietly as if she were hog-tied."

It is easy to imagine the early experiences which led to this practice of tying the hind legs of the cows. It is not a stretch of the imagination to picture a squaw picking herself up from a wreck of bucket and a plaster of milk and mud and conversing in gutturals very earnestly with that cow.

Anybody who has lived on a farm knows how mean a cow can be when she gets the kicking habit. I have heard from early farmers in western Montana some amusing stories of experiences with cows which had been purchased from Indians. The animals would never—no matter how quiet they were—submit to being milked unless they were at least given the impression that they were tied.

"We had a cow on the farm when I was a small boy," said A. J. Violette when I asked him the other day what he knew about Indian milking, "that my father had bought of an Indian. She was as gentle as could be in every other respect, but she would not be milked unless she thought she was tied as to her hind legs. All that was necessary was just to toss a little piece of rope around her hind legs. That gave her the idea that she was tied fast and she would stand stock-still as long as that rope was there. But if anybody ever tried to milk her without the rope, she would kick the milker on the top of the head every time."

The Indians, as far as I can learn, didn't cut hay for the winter feed for their stock. They relied entirely, as did the eastern-range stockmen later, upon the grass which cured standing. But the early white stockmen, of whom MacArthur was a type, naturally thought it necessary to prepare some hay to carry them through the winter. They guarded their meadows and saved them for the winter feed. And it was splendid forage which they found in these valleys of western Montana; it required but a short experience to prove to them that there was no better grass anywhere and it was to the Bitter Root and its neighboring valleys that the early stockmen brought their horses and cattle whenever they could.

"The first job I had in Montana," said Judge Woody, while we were talking about this subject, "was cutting hay. When we drove our ox teams down the Bitter Root valley on that first trip I ever made here, Bill Madison and I were asked by the man who was in charge of the MacArthur stock near what is now Corvallis, if we wanted a job cutting hay. We told him we did but we had to go through to Hell Gate with our outfit. As soon as we had completed our contract with the freighter and had delivered our ox-teams at the Hell Gate river, we went back up the valley. It was October, but the frost had not touched the grass more than to nip the tops a little in places. I never saw a finer stand of grass than that was. The meadow where we did the cutting was, I think, a part of the McLeod ranch now. It was waist-high in fine grass and we went at it with hand scythes. Then we cocked it up with forks, eastern fashion, before getting it stowed away. There was a big lot of cattle ranging near there and they were fat and playful. They didn't seem to care much for our hay, but they delighted in tossing our little stacks about. We would have the work to do all over. Several nights they repeated this performance. They would go at the haycocks with their horns and toss the hay about faster than a machine would do it now. They made us a lot of extra work, but we were working by the day and we had been so long following oxen on the trail that the work didn't seem irksome. Anything would have been a good change from whacking steers on the trail."

Along the Bitter Root, in the valley at the mouth of the Coriacan defile, in the Frenchtown meadows and on the flat near where Superior now stands—in each of these places, the early stockmen wintered their stock. These localities were early selected as the best in the country. On the other side of the Bitter Root divide, the great stretches of bottom land along the Coeur d'Alene furnished another favorite field. How excellent was the judgment of these pioneers in the stock business, later experience has shown. They have since become the sites of the finest farms in the world—these same valleys. There has been some of the finest stock ever grown developed upon these fields; there are some of the best orchards on earth growing now upon the slopes above those meadows.

We who have seen the peerless Ogden, the matchless Hamburg, the gallant Tammany go forth from the pastures of the Bitter Root to wonderful victories on the eastern turf; we who have watched the prowess of Prodigal, Red Cherry, Brown Silk, China Silk and Doctor Spelman after they left their paddocks in the Bitter Root valley; we who have gloried in the triumphs of the Bitter Root colors on eastern tracks—we know of the later conquests of the stock which was nurtured upon the forage of these western Montana fields.

We who have seen the cattle go from these valleys to the great markets of the world and there command, year after year, the highest price paid for beef; we who have seen the butter record of the world challenged by the Mills Jersey herd, sent out from its Lolo home in the lower Bitter Root—we know what magic there is in the forage which grows upon the meadows of this great valley.

We are proud of the record that has been made by western Montana stock and we are inclined to think that we have made a great discovery in finding out the wonderful properties of the grass which grows here. We have a right to boast of the superiority of our hay and our grain—each merits the highest honors. But we have found nothing new. The Indians knew as much as we of the properties of Bitter Root grass, long before a white man had ever set foot upon this valley.

The fame of the horses which were raised in the Bitter Root in the Indian days was great—comparatively as great as the reputation of the stock which is sent out from there now. The horses of the Flatheads were as fine as any that were known.

We have intensified the application of the forage which grows upon our fields; we conserve it and we improve its quality as we are able; but we have only retained it in the position which it occupied under Indian dominion. It was the best in the world then. It is only that now. We have developed other resources amazingly; we have unearthed some of which the Indian never dreamed; we have found use for others which he spurned as of no value; but we are no wiser than he in our application of the grass of our meadows. The aboriginal stockman was keen—it seems to be a way with stockmen to be keen. He knew it took good grass to produce good stock and he found where the good grass was. We have followed the trails he blazed, we have walked in the paths which he trod in many directions. But in none have we followed more precisely in his footsteps than in our development of the stock-raising industry. The modern horsetrader is cited as the type of shrewdness which is sharp to the extent of disregarding the strict truth; but the Indian horsetrader of a generation or two ago was his counterpart; the modern could give no pointers to the ancient; the white could add nothing to the shrewdness of the red.

There is some of the old Indian stock left. In some parts of the reservation, the old Indian ponies are yet to be found. But most of the red men have improved their stock. There are some mighty fine animals now in the red man's herd. In this respect he has kept up with the times. He has taken more kindly to stockraising than to any other branch of agriculture for it is the heritage of the Flathead and the Pend d'Oreille and the Nez Perce to love good horses and to do anything he can to get them. His forefathers had the best horses of their time. He aspires to the same distinction. There will not be any Indians at all, one of these days, but the last Indian will have the best horse he can get. It may not be a very good horse, for that last Indian is apt to be a specimen of hard luck, but it will be the best horse he can get and if he has a chance to trade it for a better one, he will do it. Don't think, however, that he will trade it for a poorer one. He will not, because he is an Indian and because it is a horse.

January 6, 1912.

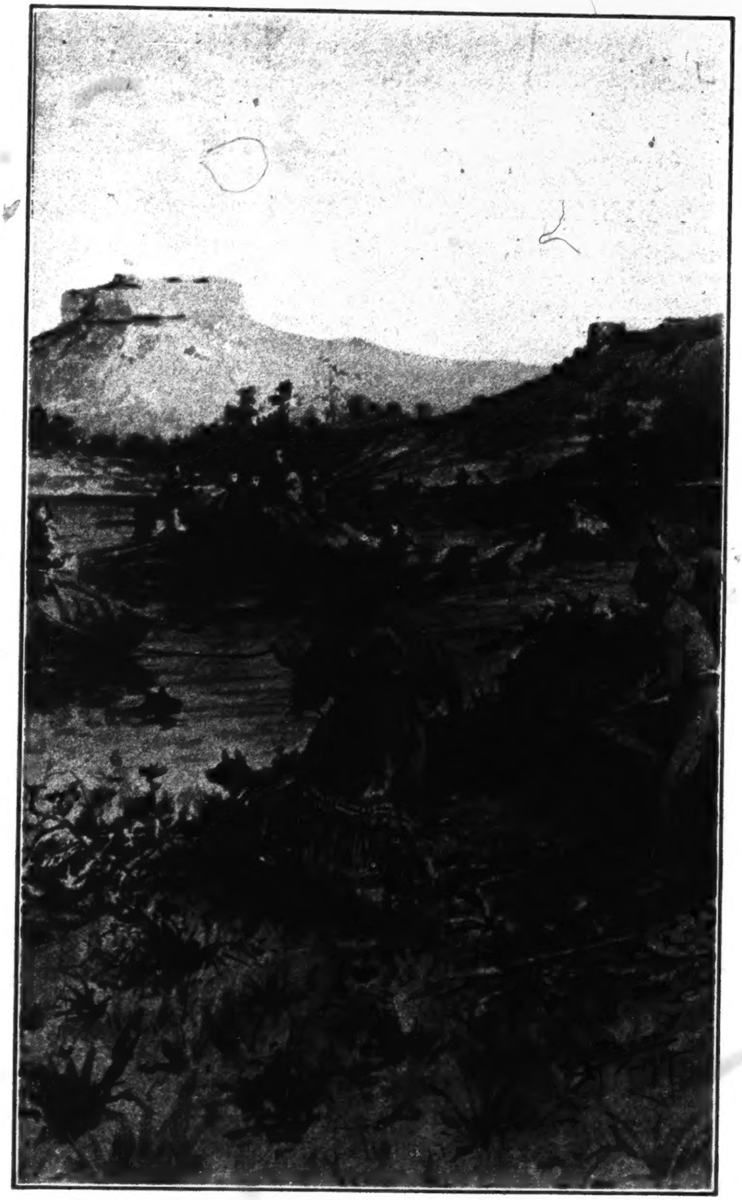
FIGHTING A WAY TO MONTANA

CERTAIN it is, the federal troops in the years immediately following 1865 found a great difference between fighting Indians and fighting the men in gray uniform who had faced them for the four years preceding. It is the testimony of many of the early emigrants who crossed the plains in 1866 and the following year, that the presence of the troops was not particularly helpful. In some instances, it was easier to get through the Indian country without troops than it was to move westward with them.

The Indians of the plains had acquired a contempt for the soldiers which they were bold to express; they thought they could defeat the bluecoats with clubs. In after years they learned to respect the hardened fighters of the army. The soldiers had a terrible schooling, but they profited by it and they afterward fought the red men to a standstill, but it was not until they had learned the difference between fighting Indians and fighting white men. In the years of which I write, they had not changed their tactics from the practice of the civil war. It was then that the old plainsmen shared with the Indians the contempt which they felt for the soldiery.

Comfortable and contented in his western Montana home, Major John B. Catlin of Missoula lives the days of the autumn of his life—comfortable as he is comfortable who has fought his way through perils of trail and mountain to the promised land, contented as only he can be who looks back upon a fight well-fought and a race well-won. He knows a lot about Indians. In 1866 he fought Sioux and Cheyennes; in 1877 he led the civilian volunteers in the battle of the Big Hole against the Nez Perces. Between times, he lived among the friendly Flatheads in the Bitter Root and, later, he had experience as agent among the Blackfeet on their reservation.

Some of the things he knows about the Indians, Major Catlin tells willingly. Others, he tells with some reluctance. Yet others, he will not tell at all. But there are those who will tell the things about which the major will not talk, and what they tell is all to the major's credit, for it deals with hard fighting, stern shooting and



Fording in Buffalo Skins
—Painting by Paxson.

conspicuous bravery which, in these days of Carnegie medals, would have covered Major Catlin from head to foot with silver and gold trophies. It is his modesty which seals his lips when I ask him about the incidents which he refuses to discuss, but some day I am going to write the story of these deeds of the major's as they are told to me by those who witnessed what he did. This story, however, deals with Major Catlin's advent into Montana, and is told as nearly as possible as he has told it to me at different times during the couple of decades that I have been privileged to call him my friend.

It isn't so very easy to get Major Catlin to talk about himself. He would rather tell about the things which somebody else did. A good many times, when I have got him started upon a story about himself, he has switched off upon another tack until I have headed him up into the wind again. We have talked together—Major Catlin and I—a good many hours and the story which forms this chapter in the Old Trails series is made up of information which has come to me in piecemeal form during these talks. I expect, if the Old Trail stories are continued, there will be some others drawn from this same material. I feel in duty bound to tell Major Catlin's part in the Big Hole battle, but I cannot tell that from his own story—I am going to draw that picture as some of his comrades have painted it for me. The major tells the Big Hole story in a way that does not give himself the credit which he deserves; I have appointed myself the historian of that battlefield and I have the material for what seems to me a good story and some day I am going to write it just as I please, without submitting it to the major.

But this story is the major's own and I wish I could tell it as he has told it to me. He is a good storyteller and is at times picturesque in his descriptions. This, however, is a Sunday morning story and it would not do to repeat verbatim some of the major's descriptions of Indians and quitters. The ministerial association would not approve the story and the United States mails would not carry it. But it is set down here substantially as the major has told it to me at intervals during a good many years.

The major had served through the years of the Civil war. He was mustered out after the grand review at Washington and was turned loose as a civilian in Indianapolis in the summer of 1865. With him was a youngster about his own age—Steve Grover—they had been chums in the war days and they stuck together after they were mustered out. They tried to become farmers in the Hoosier state. Until the spring of 1866 they made a sort of stagger at it, but how successful they were may be inferred from a talk which they had in April. Steve asked what could be done to relieve the monotony. Catlin declared it was the "far west" for him and his comrade joined in the declaration.

There were some formalities to be observed, but the summer found the two in the guise of bullwhackers, contracted to drive oxen from Nebraska City to Montana. Neither of them had ever spoken to a plains steer before and they had some interesting experiences before they learned that the plains "bulls" were a different lot of animals from the meek oxen of the Indiana farms. Major Catlin, with that good luck which had always characterized him and which has since attended him, drew the mess wagon as his assignment and with it the only bull-team that had any semblance of experience in the yoke. Even with his good luck, Catlin managed to tip over the mess-wagon on the first day out. The experience which he gained from observing the way steers acted and the remarks which were addressed to him by the wagon boss and other members of the party made an experienced bullwhacker out of him, and that night's camp found him a hardened plainsman. Some people learn quickly and some have their instruction handed to them in condensed form. The initiation of Catlin into western ways partook of each of these methods and was effective. After that first day's experience nobody had to tell him anything about what to do with his team of bulls.

"The trouble with Steve Grover and me," said Major Catlin to me one day, as we were driving up the Coriacan defile to the Jocko agency, "was that we felt sure we were the men who had put down the rebellion. This made us over-confident, perhaps. But we were not over-confident more than twenty-four hours after we joined that bull train. Not much."

The trail followed the Union Pacific construction up the Platte. It was monotonously dull, plodding along beside the train. And there was no variation in the monotony when the trail left the railway line and swung up to Fort Laramie. But at Fort Laramie the pilgrims left the beaten path. They were planning to take the Bozeman trail from there into Montana and the condition of the country ahead of them made it necessary that they travel with a big outfit. By this time the youngsters had acquired a mule team and a pair of saddlehorses; they had a wagon to go with the mules and might have traveled alone but they were warned and looked about them to find a large outfit with which they might make the journey.

Nelson Story was at Fort Laramie on his way to Bozeman with 3,000 head of Texas cattle which he was going to feed on the Gallatin. He had also a big wagon train, loaded with the stock for a grocery store which he was going to start in Bozeman. The boys were glad of the opportunity to get away under such good conditions and they were welcomed by Mr. Story. Their outfit became a part of his train and started northward.

Along the trail the government was erecting a chain of military posts. General Carrington, who afterward negotiated the removal of Charlot from the Bitter Root, was in command of the troops engaged in the construction. One post, Fort Reno, had been completed. The building of Fort Kearney was in progress. The posts further north had been located but not built. Some of them were never built.

The train moved on without serious incident. The country was alive with Indians. There were signs of fighting—burned wagons and dead stock—in places and at times the Story outfit would spy Indians at a distance. But it was not until within about 10 miles of Fort Reno that there was any open hostility toward the train. This was probably due to the keen lookout which Story kept and to his intimate knowledge of the country. There were thousands of Indians within striking distance of the trail, but the train was not molested until it reached a point so close to the new post as to seem safe.

In the edge of the bad lands, the train was attacked. There was a brisk engagement; it didn't last long; probably the Indians, who had been spying upon the train, were merely trying it out or perhaps they couldn't resist the temptation of the stock cattle that were being driven with the train. However it was, the reds swooped down upon the travelers with a flight of arrows and a charge to stampede the stock. The men of the train responded briskly with their rifles. Two of the drivers were wounded by arrows, but nobody was killed.

The Indians retreated as fast as they had advanced, but they took with them a little bunch of the stock cattle, hustling the steers ahead of them as they withdrew into the fastnesses of the bad lands.

"How many cattle did you lose?" I asked Major Catlin.

"Lose?" repeated he. "We didn't lose a single head. We just followed those Indians into the bad lands and got the cattle back."

"Did they yield the steers willingly?"

"Yes. We surprised them in their camp and they were not in shape to protest against the surrender of the cattle."

The recaptured stock was driven back to the trail. The train had camped where the little battle had taken place and there the cattle were turned back into the herd. Three of them had been wounded in the fighting and had to be killed; they furnished beef for the train.

Messengers were sent to Fort Reno for an ambulance for the wounded. When this transportation came, the whole outfit moved to Reno, where there was a brief rest. The wounded men were left at Reno, where they subsequently recovered, but they never rejoined the train. One of them was a Texan who had been in charge of the longhorns that had been driven up from his state.

"About an hour before we had the little fight below Reno," said Major Catlin, "we had met a little Frenchman and a boy with what seemed to be a trapper's outfit. They were unharnessing their team and making camp. We told them the Indians were thick and that we were going to camp a short distance above. We invited them to turn back and camp with us for greater safety. The Frenchman said he wasn't half as much afraid of Indians as he was of some white men. That set us going and, telling him to be careful, we moved along. After the fight, we went back—a couple of us—to see if the Frenchman had escaped. We found the bodies of the man and boy, scalped and mutilated. Their wagon was burned; their horses were gone; their provisions were scattered over the ground. We buried the bodies and went back to the train."

From Fort Reno the train moved on to Fort Phil Kearney. There General Carrington was personally directing the erection of new buildings. The train was halted by soldiers, three miles from the new post and Story was told not to camp any nearer to the post than that, as the general wanted to save the meadows for the army stock. Also, Story was forbidden to proceed on his march on account of the danger from Indians along the trail ahead.

"Here was our predicament," said Major Catlin as he laughed over the situation when he told me about it. "We were camped three miles from the post, so far that the soldiers could not have rendered us any assistance if we were attacked; we were forbidden to proceed, as the soldiers couldn't leave their building operations to escort us; we just had to sit still and twirl our thumbs. There were three miles of the fine meadow grass between us and the post. The troops had a few mule teams that were being used to transport logs and hay and General Carrington had one saddle horse left that the Indians had not captured. That three miles of grass was for the saddle horse, I suppose.

"We built two field corrals, one for the work cattle and one for the Texas stock. Then we settled down to wait for Carrington's permission to move on. We waited two long weeks and one night Story proposed that we move ahead without Carrington's permit. He said if we started in the night, we could get so far from the post before morning that none of the soldiers would dare come after us and we could then keep going.

"That listened good to us. We talked over the plan and then voted on it. There was only one man who voted against it. His name was George Dow and we at once arrested him and placed him under guard so he could not tell Carrington of our plan. We took him along with us for the first night's march and then turned him loose to go back to the post. It was too late for them to catch us then.

"There were 27 men in our party. There were 300 troops at the fort. But the Indians were more afraid of us than they were of the soldiers. We were armed with Remington breechloaders and the troops had only the old Springfield rifles. The little brush we had with the Indians below Reno had taught them something of the effectiveness of our fire, and I guess they were a little superstitious. Twenty-seven of those Remingtons were enough to stand off the 3,000 reds with bows and arrows after we had got them scared. But the troops had never scared them and they were bold enough around the fort.

"We made our preparations according to Story's plan and pulled out one night after the post was asleep. That first night's drive was so successful that we decided to keep up the plan of traveling nights and resting days. The result was that we were attacked only two or three times and each time was when we were resting during the day; we easily stood off the reds and had no trouble at all. Close to the fort there were more than three thousand Indians. As we moved up toward the Big Horn country, they became fewer. We left Kearney on the night of October 22; on December 21, the Indians attacked the post and killed more than a hundred of the troops; probably they were mustering for the attack while we were there. All the while they kept up their attacks upon the hay trains, wood trains and detached parties of soldiers. But they got only one of our men on the whole trip.

"That was while we were waiting on Carrington's orders at Kearney. One morning a herder dashed into camp saying he had heard suspicious noises and he suspected that something was wrong with his partner on the night herd. We hurried down to the stock corral and, after some search, found the man's body. He had been scalped and his body was shot so full of arrows that he looked like a big pincushion. We buried him. That was our only fatality. Had we remained under Carrington's orders, we would all have been included in the December massacre."

The Story train continued by night marches as far as Fort Smith on the Big Horn. This brought them into the territory of the friendly Crows and it was possible to relax somewhat the vigilance of the earlier march. The Yellowstone was forded at the site of Fort Fisher, which was one of Carrington's forts that was never built. Then it was an easy journey down through Emigrant gulch to Bozeman, where Story paid off his men, left his cattle and unloaded his grocery stock. He took the rest of the train through to Virginia City, which was reached December 9. There the Hoosier boys left him, but they have always remained admirers of the sturdy old pioneer, who built the city of Bozeman.

"I never saw Nelson Story after we left him in Virginia

City," said Major Catlin the other day, "until he came over to Missoula in 1892, talking for Bozeman for the capital. We had a pleasant visit then. But I want to say now that, even after three years on the skirmish line in the Civil war, I had never seen a fighting man like Nelson Story. He hunted a fight and when he found it he knew how to handle it. He never carried a rifle, but there were always two big navy revolvers on his hips. He was always splendidly mounted and would ride like the wind. He would say 'Come on, boys,' and ride away. Of course, we'd follow him—we'd have followed him to hell—but accustomed as the Civil war had made me to following almost any daredevil leader, there were a good many times when Nelson Story had me guessing. The Indians soon got to know him. Also they feared him. They knew he would go through with whatever he undertook and they had no time to bother with him."

At Virginia City the Hoosiers bade goodbye to Story. They took their team and their saddle horses and started out to find the best place in Montana. How they found it and the troubles they had in getting to it must furnish the material for another story some day. It is enough now to say that Major Catlin lives in Missoula and that he is one of the few men in the world who are thoroughly satisfied. He has faced some stern situations; he has passed through some dangerous experiences; he has made some enemies—for he is a very positive individual—but they leave him alone; he has a host of friends and in their midst he moves happily—erect, jaunty and with a spring in his step that many a younger man envies. He is "seventy years young." He is the type of the men who made Montana. I am mighty glad to be able to call him friend. If his friendship for me stands the test of this chapter in the Old Trails series, I have another to write which concerns him. For the sake of the history in it and specially for my own sake, I earnestly hope he will give this his approval.

January 13, 1912.

FINDING A HOME

THE general eastern idea of Montana, even now, is pretty vague. And this condition exists in spite of the publicity which has been given our state and its resources, in spite of the easy means of transportation, in spite of the records that have been made by its people and its products. It is easy, then, to understand that the conception of Montana in 1866 must have been very misty in the minds of those people of the east who set out to locate in the then territory.

They had much trouble—most of them—in reaching their destination. In these Old Trail stories I have related the experiences of some of those early participants in Montana homeseeker excursions. The very hardships which were encountered along the overland trail insured a good population for Montana, for if ever there was a case of the survival of the fittest, it was in the journey to Montana in the days when the bull-team held the place which the Pullman now occupies. Montana got the persistent, earnest ones; the others dropped out along the way.

When they finally got to Montana, these early arrivals were not altogether sure that they liked the place. It was different, perhaps, from what their fancy had pictured it, and the gold nuggets didn't rattle into their pans as fast as they had expected. Certainly it was very different from the places they had left behind. They had no basis for comparison other than that and they wanted—some of them—to size up Montana along with other western sections. There were a good many of them who did that very thing. After a stay in Montana, they moved on through Idaho, to the coast territories and drifted through the camps in Oregon and Washington. And the records show that a good many of them came back. Montana stood their test and there was nothing better in their estimation.

Of this class is Major John B. Catlin, of whose arrival in Montana I wrote a week ago. He and his partner, Steve Grover, having fought their way through Indians and having dodged the protection of soldiers, arrived in Virginia City, December 9, 1866. They looked about the placer camp a bit and concluded that it was not a very good place for a tenderfoot to winter in. So they took another partner and set out to find a place where they could winter comfortably and economically. The three had three saddle horses, a team of mules and a wagon. They loaded supplies into the wagon and set out upon their tour of discovery. It was a good many months before any of them located permanently and when this did happen, they were all well scattered. But in the case of Major Catlin the long trail led back to Montana and to the Bitter Root valley.

"I have had a good many chances," said the major to me the other day as he reviewed some of the incidents which are here set down. "If I had done differently in regard to some of them, I might be a millionaire now. But I had also a good many chances to be dead. I passed those up, as well, and I am alive and in Missoula, well satisfied with the way things have turned out and not begrudging any of the good fortune which came to those who picked up some of the chances which I passed by and sorry for the fate of some of those other fellows who accepted the chances which I missed and are now a long time dead."

The three tenderfeet with their winter outfit, left Virginia City over the old stage-road, which they followed toward Silver Bow as far as the mouth of Divide creek. There they turned up into the Big Hole valley and drove to the first stream. It is now called Charcoal creek and it is where the dam is built which sends power and water to Butte. They had taken in two older men who were experienced in western life, and the five of them built a cabin, 16 by 24 feet in size, near this creek. There they spent the winter of 1866-67.

Thirty years after that winter—in 1896—Major Catlin's son, Wilbur, went up Divide creek to make surveys and measurements for the Big Hole dam. It was a job that required nearly the entire winter's time. Young Catlin and his partner, looking about for quarters, came upon an old cabin. They cleaned it out and lived in it all winter. In the spring he mentioned the cabin to his father. The major listened. "Where was it?" he asked. He was told that it was on the first creek above the mouth of Divide. Wilbur described it—the sill logs were big firs, two feet through, and the rest were cottonwoods; a big stone fireplace was in one end; and so on. It was the cabin which Father Catlin and his partners had built the winter after they left Virginia City.

"I couldn't cook," Major Catlin says, "so in the division of labor that winter I was made packer. We killed a lot of antelope and deer and some elk and sheep. When our supplies got low, I would pack meat down to the stage station at Divide and trade it there for groceries. The station was run by Mrs. Fischer, whose husband drove the stage between Silver Bow and Virginia City. She was a fine cook and when I got down there I used to stay as long as I could. When I got home I'd tell the boys about the rough trail. They accepted the story all winter and it was not until we went out in the spring and stopped at Mrs. Fischer's for dinner that they understood, and then, under the influence of that dinner, they couldn't blame me. I used to stay a week at a time. Hay for my horse was 40 cents a pound, but I could pay for it in meat, so I didn't care. Mrs. Fischer used to send up and down the line by her husband for books and papers and she lent us all she got. We had something to read—though there was no news in it—and our winter was comfortable and pleasant. It was one of the finest winters I ever spent in my life."

It was Christmas day when the little cabin was finished on Charcoal creek. In March the boys said farewell to their winter quarters and moved down the trail to the stageroad. The season was early that spring. The water started running well in late March and when they got to Silver Bow the tenderfeet made a contract with a man named Walker to work some ground on shares. Walker was to furnish water, sluiceboxes, tools and cabin; the boys were to be allowed $3 a day out of the first gold taken out; the balance was to be divided equally. The boys stripped ground for the first pit, Walker good-naturedly showing them how to do it, and had that first pit cleaned up in 30 days. The cleanup netted them $11 a day for the time they worked. The next pit cleared them $9 a day; on the third they earned $7 a day. That ended their contract work and they found employment at $6 a day for the rest of the summer.

In the fall of 1867, Catlin and Grover left their partners and went to Bannack, Boise, Baker City, Umatilla, Portland, Olympia and Seattle. They wanted to satisfy themselves as to which part of the country was best. They traveled in their own outfit to Umatilla; there they sold their horses and went down the river by steamer. That winter they worked in a sawmill at Port Discovery, 12 hours a day.

In the spring of 1868, they talked it over and agreed that they had seen nothing as good as Montana and decided they would return to the mountains. They bought an outfit and started across the range. It was too early and the snow was so deep in the passes that the blazes on the trees were hidden and the travelers were forced to retreat. They shipped to Portland and then went to The Dalles, where they planned to outfit again for the trip over the Columbia trail. In the afternoon of the day they reached The Dalles, each bought a saddle horse; they planned to buy a pack horse in the morning.

"We went to bed that night," said Major Catlin reminiscently, "both firmly determined to come to Montana. I was surprised in the morning when Steve said he was going back to

Portland. He was positive. I was equally positive that I was going to Montana. He gave me the saddle horse he had bought. I went to the wharf to see him aboard the steamer. We shook hands and parted, after years as blanket mates. So quickly do things happen. I have never seen Steve since. Last year I heard he was living in California."

Catlin then went to get his horses; he had no need to buy a pack animal. His was a roan and the Steve horse was a gray. Saddle, pack and supplies were bought and Catlin started alone over the Columbia trail, back to Montana. He got to Montana all right, but there were many things which happened before he got there.

"The trail was the worst I ever saw," said the major continuing his narration. "It ran along blue slide rock for miles and miles. Now and then there was a scraped stone, where a horseshoe had marked it, but for two days that was the only guide I had. On the second day out, I came to a little creek, where there was a clearing. Here were running water and clover. I lost no time in feeding the horses. It was 11 o'clock in the forenoon and I made camp and cooked a meal. The horses were greedily eating in the clover and I lay down in the June sunshine for a nap. In my pack I had an army Remington six-shooter. It occurred to me that I should have this gun handy and I got it out, cleaned it, oiled it and loaded it. Then I went back to take my nap.

"I don't know how long I slept, but it was considerably after noon when I waked and discovered that my horses were missing. I was some scared. On the edge of the clearing there was a giant fir that had been uprooted and I climbed up on the roots of this tree to look out over the trail. Up and down the river I could see nothing. But, looking up into the woods on the little creek, I got a glimpse of the gray horse. Then I hiked out through the timber to overtake the horses. I had a hackamore on the roan, as he was hard to catch sometimes, but the gray had no rope at all, as he followed the roan. I hurried on after them, thinking that the roan was leading the way into the hills.

"I gained on the horses and just as I was about to speak to the gray horse I made a discovery that a man was leading the roan ahead. Looking again, I discovered that this man wore a gun that looked to me to be about three feet long. Later I discovered it was a regulation revolver. There was but one thing for me to do and that was to work around in front and get the drop on the fellow before he saw me.

"Keeping behind trees as much as possible, I flanked the horsethief and finally got around in front of him. The roan horse saw me and lifted his head. I thought he was going to whinny and I made one quick jump behind a tree. I pulled my gun and held it on the fellow, who had not heard me. I told him to drop that rope and hold up his hands.

"He complied quickly. Then he told me his gun was not loaded and offered to show me. I told him I would find out for myself and ordered him to hold his hands higher. He stretched up his arms and I relieved him of his gun. It was not such a very big gun, either, when I came to get it in my hand.

"Well, I had my horses back, but I had a horsethief on my hands, and I didn't know what to do with him. I told him to take the rope and lead the roan back to camp ahead of me. All the while I was wondering how to get rid of him and he seemed to read my thoughts. When we got to the clearing he asked me what I was going to do with him. I told him I was going to blow the top of his head off, but he didn't believe me. He told me a tale of woe of a mother and some brothers and sisters, of sickness and hunger. He said he had a fever sore on his leg and showed me. He said he hadn't had anything to eat for two days and he showed that, too. 'There's the grub,' I said. 'Cook your dinner.'

"He went to work, cooking. While he was getting his meal, I tried to decide what to do with him. I couldn't have him with me, for he was the limit. While I was thinking it over, I looked down the trail and saw a man coming with three packhorses. I was glad and went to meet him. It was then 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The man coming was a miner—an Irishman—bound for Bear gulch in Montana, where he had been the season before. I helped him unpack and led him to where I had made camp. There he saw my horsethief friend and exclaimed, 'What in hell is this fellow doing here?' I told him the story and the Irishman suggested that we kill him and throw him into the river.

"I dissuaded him, however, and suggested that we keep the fellow's gun and give him in exchange one of the miner's horses which was lame. Finally we did this, giving him an old quilt for a saddle, starting him off down the trail and telling him to keep going. We never saw or heard of him again. The Irishman and I became great friends. I called him 'Jack' and that is what he called me. We came on up the river together.

"When we got to Spokane falls, we stopped to rest our horses and ourselves. One afternoon we were fishing below the falls, when Jack said to me. 'This is going to be a great place. We can take up a couple of claims here, build a station and take care of the freighters. Some day there will be a railway through here and this will be a great place. I have twenty-five hundred dollars on me and I'll furnish all the money that's necessary.' That was the first time either of us had ever mentioned money. I had a good deal myself, but I hadn't said anything about it. I told Jack that probably all he said was true, but it would take a long time and I knew as good a place where there would be things doing right away. So we left Spokane falls. The place where we camped is now almost in the heart of the city. That was one of the chances I missed, but I have also had a good many chances to be dead and I am still alive. So I figure I am ahead of the game."

The two Jacks came on up the river to Missoula. It was on that visit that Major Catlin first met Judge Woody, who was clerk in the postoffice. Catlin wrote a letter home—the first in a year—and went to mail it. He laid down a quarter and got a three-cent stamp. Woody started to give him stamps to make up the quarter, which was the smallest coin there was then, but Catlin told him he didn't need any stamps and to keep the change.

They went on to Bear gulch, where the Irishman said goodbye to Catlin. The latter went on to Carpenter bar, where he remained until June, 1868. Then he came back to Missoula.

Before he came west in 1866, Catlin had heard that some cousins of his, named Elliott, who had come west, had been killed by Indians. When he was in Boise on his way to the coast from Bannack, Catlin met a man who had been in the Bitter Root valley, living with a family named Elliott, whose family names he happened to mention. One was Lynde, not a usual name, and Catlin identified these Elliotts as his cousins. He wrote to them and agreed to visit them. When he returned to Missoula in the summer of 1868 it was for the purpose of keeping this promise.

He went up the valley and found his relatives. In the autumn of 1868 he bought the squatter right to a ranch which has since become known as the Watts ranch, near Hamilton. In 1870, Major Catlin married. His home, after he sold the ranch, was at Stevensville for many years. Ever since 1868, the Bitter Root has been his home and he has no longing for any other. He is of those who have sought widely for a better place and have failed to find it. In his years of residence in the valley, he has had many experiences that are interesting. Reference has been made in these stories of his participation in the battle of the Big Hole, when he commanded the civilian volunteers who marched with Gibbon after Chief Joseph. That is a story which must some time be told in detail. It was my intent when I started to write this one, to tell of the wanderings of Major Catlin in his survey of the northwest which preceded his decision to settle permanently in the Bitter Root valley. He is a Montanan from choice and he does not regret the choice.

During his years in Stevensville, Major Catlin was the trusted friend of old Chief Charlot. During the dark days of Flathead starvation, before the tribe consented to the change to the Jocko valley, the sullen old chief was fed from the Catlin hotel. Always he retained his affection for Major Catlin.

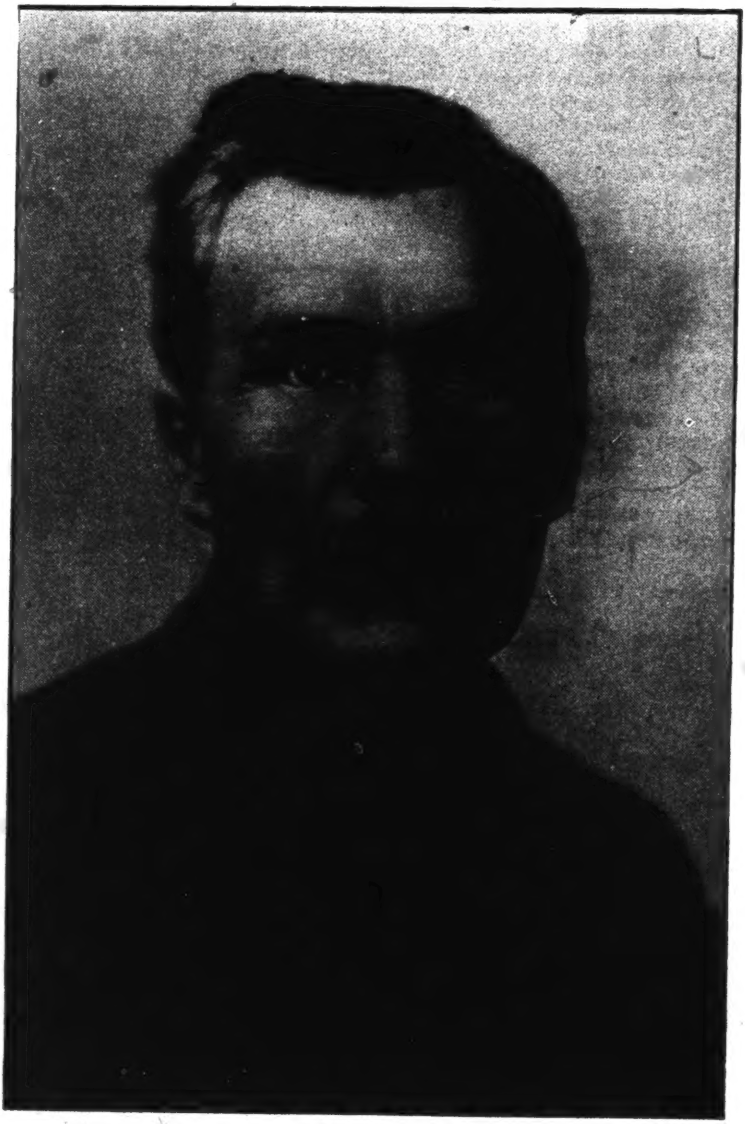
About 10 years ago, I wanted to get a photograph of Charlot.

At that time, he was hostile to the idea of having his picture made and all attempts to get the desired photograph had proved futile. One day I asked Major Catlin to drive with me to the Jocko agency, there to see if he could coax Charlot into consent. It was a delightful trip we made—one of the drives which I shall never forget. The weather was fine and the country was beautiful. Best of all, we got the photograph.

Major Catlin had a heart-to-heart talk with Charlot and the latter let his wife be photographed as an experiment. Then the major talked with him some more and the old chief agreed to pose if Major Catlin would stand with him. This we arranged easily. The major stood far enough away to be cut out, while Charlot posed proudly in the very center of the photographic plate. It was one of the few times that I ever saw Charlot smile. He was genuinely glad to see his old friend again and, contrary to his custom, he made no attempt to conceal his delight. There was a long visit—a regular Indian visit, and the major and I were late to dinner when we got back to Missoula that night. But we had some photographs of Charlot in the box under the buggy seat.

I mention this incident to show the sort of man this pioneer is. He has the friendship of a host of people whom he has known and who have known him during the years that have elapsed since he entered Montana in 1866. His has been a busy life. There is something to show for it all. He has written a record in Montana history of which any man might well be proud. And his philosophy is good. He regrets none of the chances which he passed up and which he rejoices in having passed up so many "chances to be dead." He is very much alive—contented and happy to be a Montanan. And, after all, what better lot than that could befall any man?

January 20, 1912.



Duncan McDonald

THE CANYON OF FIRST THINGS

ONE OF THE FAMOUS passes through the western Montana mountains is Hell Gate canyon. This rift in the rugged hills is, for the most part, cut only wide enough for the river which courses westward between its walls. Here and there a pocket has been formed by erosion; occasionally there is a widening where a side stream finds its way into the river, flowing from the eternal snows into the sunny tide of the faraway Pacific. This picturesque pass extends from the junction of the Deer Lodge and Little Blackfoot rivers—where the Deer Lodge valley ends—to the high-walled exit, 75 miles to the west, where the canyon widens into the broad sweep of the Missoula valley. Once its forest was broken only by the channel of the river which coursed its entire length. Indian trails wound through its groves of pine and fir and tamarack or climbed its steep and rocky sides when the course became too narrow. Now the skill and persistence of man has changed the course of the stream—building dykes here and digging new a channel there—until there has been room enough made for two great trails of steel and the beaten highway over which speeds the automobile and along which drags the slower-moving wagon of the wood-hauler or the farmer. It is Hell Gate canyon yet, but it is not the Hell Gate through which the Indian, the trapper and the prospector moved. Its high walls have changed but little, save where they have been tunneled for a way for the railway or where a shelf has been blasted out upon which to lay the lines of steel. But its narrow floor bears now slight resemblance to the Hell Gate canyon which the first white man found as they groped their way through the mountains, seeking the new country beyond.

In an earlier story of the Old Trails, I have written of the origin of the name—Hell Gate—of this mountain pass. "The place of ambush" was what the Indians called it. The voyageurs caught the idea in "Le Porte du Infer" and this was naturally anglicized into Hell Gate. It is a forbidding name. Far pleasanter in sound is "Missoula" which we got directly from the Indian words. We should be glad that Worden and Higgins didn't bring the name along when they moved the town of Hell Gate to Missoula, but gave the pleasanter name to the new location. However, the Frenchmen's name clung to the river and to the canyon and it is through Hell Gate that the traveler reaches the Bitter Root country. And, it is a matter of habit to become accustomed to almost anything, so has "Hell Gate" lost its disagreeable suggestiveness. It has become associated with the really beautiful canyon which it designates rather than the painful memories of warfare and carnage from which it was derived. Even now, after the canyon has been remodeled by man and much of the picturesqueness has been destroyed by the diversion of the stream into a channel like a canal, there remains much beauty in Hell Gate canyon. Though it was but a highway for the Indian it has been the scene of some of the most important events connected with the white man's development of the west. Picturesquely beautiful, it has yet played a wonderful part in the utilitarian movements of the civilization of the west.

Hell Gate might appropriately be called "The Canyon of First Things." Though Lewis and Clark missed the Hell Gate pass in their westward journey and crossed into the Bitter Root from the Big Hole over the difficult Gibbon pass, when they might have had easier traveling by the longer way around had they swung north to Silver Bow creek—there has been hardly any other first thing associated with the development of this region which has not been initiated in Hell Gate canyon. Wonderful indeed is the history of this mountain pass! Remarkable has been its importance in relation to the reclamation of the one-time wilderness about it!

In Hell Gate canyon it was that Granville Stuart and his companions discovered the first gold found in Montana—a discovery which started the tide of immigration toward Montana, fully two decades earlier than it would have ordinarily set in. In Hell Gate canyon was driven the golden spike which completed the construction of the Northern Pacific and, later and within sight of the scene of Villard's triumph, the hammers swung which pounded home the last spike in the building of the Milwaukee. In Hell Gate canyon was done the first commercial lumbering in Montana. Through Hell Gate canyon journeyed the first white settlers of Montana—Father DeSmet and his companions. At the mouth of Hell Gate canyon was signed the first treaty with Montana Indians. In the shadow of Hell Gate canyon's portal were planted the first apple trees in Montana. Close to the canyon was born the first white child to see the light in Montana. There are many interesting chapters of Montana history which center here. Volumes might be written of the movements which have had their origin here.

There are other stories—many of them—which might be told of events which have had their stage-setting in Hell Gate canyon. Not all peaceful have been the incidents in its history. As its name came from its baptism in Indian blood, so has the canyon held true to its appellation in many of its subsequent events. In Hell Gate canyon the now great lumber industry of western Montana was inaugurated by a battle over a millsite and there are in Missoula some men who were participants in the "Cramer gulch war." It was in Hell Gate canyon that bandits perpetrated their daring holdups of the limited express; the death of Dan O'Neal, the more successful resistance by George Wilson, the pursuit of the holdups and their thrilling escape in one instance and their final capture in another—all these are chapters in the sanguinary side of Hell Gate canyon.

Then there is the story of the years-long battle of engineers with the river—battle for the right of way through the canyon. This long struggle cost millions of dollars and not a few human lives. The river did not surrender easily to the endeavor to direct its course anew. It clung tenaciously to the broad curves which it had always followed through open glades; it left reluctantly its sharp turns around sheer, rocky course it had followed since the hills were cleft and the canyon formed. For fully 10 years this contest waged and then, when it had been seemingly won, there came the greatest show of strength the river had ever given. Seventy-five miles of the Northern Pacific's new double track and 75 miles of the Milwaukee's just-completed line were swept away. Devastation was complete and the struggle had to be waged again. The engineers think they have triumphed now. But they thought so once before.

It is an interesting retrospect—this look backward over the history of Hell Gate canyon. It suggests a host of stories. Hell Gate canyon's record might well be used to fill these "Old Trail" columns for a good many Sundays. It was, however, my purpose at this time to refer to the importance of the part which the canyon has played in the great historic drama of Montana. There are few places in the state in which so much history has been crowded into so small a space. Every day there are hundreds of people who travel up and down the canyon in the trains of two great railways. They must, perforce, admire the beauty of the scenes through which they pass. Not many of them realize that the now open course of the canyon was once a densely timbered place. Much of its beauty remains, but it has lost a good deal of the picturesque charm which they describe who were early travelers over its old trail.

Though the white man's main thoroughfare east and west runs the whole length of Hell Gate canyon, this was not the main-traveled trail of the Indian in his pilgrimages over the hills to the buffalo country. His way led from Hell Gate up the Big

Blackfoot and thence into the Sun river country. He went up the Hell Gate trail, however, for the flints with which he tipped his arrows. The stream which runs down from Granite mountain and enters the Hell Gate at Drummond is even now called Flint creek. There were also pilgrimages to the Deer Lodge valley—called by the red men "The Lodge of the Whitetailed Deer," the name being derived from the abundance of whitetails in the vicinity of the lodge-shaped mound at Warm Springs. But as a general-utility trail, the path up Hell Gate was little used by the west-side Indians. However, it was one of the early trails blazed by the whites. The voyageurs seem to have adopted it early. When the center of activity in Montana became fixed for a time in the placer region around Alder gulch, it was the natural route for westward travel and, before long the pack trail of the earliest travelers became widened into the stage road and the route of the first northern transcontinental railway was thus fixed. But, even then, it was a beautiful place. There are many references in the annals of the stagecoach days, to the beauty and pleasure of the ride from Deer Lodge to Missoula. One of the pleasantest stories of stagecoach travel is that recently written by Mrs. Carrie A. Strahorn of Spokane. An early experience of hers, which she charmingly relates, was the ride down Hell Gate canyon. Mrs. Strahorn, in the late 70's, was traveling through the west with her husband. They left Helena in the morning and in the old Concord coach came by way of Deer Lodge to Missoula. They had supper at the old McBurney house in Deer Lodge and then, after a brief rest, climbed back into the coach for the night ride westward. The trip from Deer Lodge to Missoula, Mrs. Strahorn describes thus:

"A night in an overcrowded coach is never a joy to be anticipated, but it is a deal of discomfort to be avoided. Just as one loses himself in a moment's drowsiness the wheels either fall into a chuckhole that will send one pawing air for something to grapple, or if the wheels strike a rock in the roadway it will stagger the whole coach and give such a lurching as will throw one's head nearly off the shoulders. Then some one gets cramps and everyone else must readjust his position to accommodate the peculiarity of that knotting muscle. As the night progresses and nearly everyone is overcome with the stupor of fatigue, someone becomes reminiscent and wants to tell a life history that should have closed before that trip began. No one wants to hear it, yet no one has the courage or the discourtesy to say so, and the narrator croons on until he has added to the record all the chestnut stories of the tenderfoot, and he himself has fallen to the foot of the ladder as an entertainer. We had one such who also related such thrilling Indian tales of massacres in that very canyon through which we were passing, that we fully expected some revenge to be taken upon our own stageload of people by the watchful Indians.

"But mornings have a way of coming around about once in so often and so it came again at last, shedding a rich glow over the mountain tops and revealing through the dissolving night the beauteous landscape along some of the headwaters of the Columbia river.

"From Deer Lodge to Missoula, we forded the river seven times and crossed it twice on bridges. It was a veritable Lover's Lane leading through bowers of wild roses; oftentimes the rosebushes arched over the stageroad and joined their blooms in a wealth of beauty and untrammeled luxuriance, filling the air with their fragrance and our hearts with admiration and joy. It was an expanse of earth set apart for wild growth, not only of flowers but of wild berries and wild animals.

"From the seat with the driver there were views of long avenues ahead and almost too often glinting water in the distance betokened another fording of the river. Though clear as crystal, it was deep and swift and when the leaders of our four-horse team reluctantly made the leap down the steep bank it always sent creepers up my spine. The water grew deeper at every ford, from the many lateral feeders of canyon springs, and my breath stopped and choked a little higher in my throat, as I leaned forward with contracted muscles as if it helped the horses drag their heavy burden over the rocky river bed.

"Grand old pine trees, tall and stately, were gathered in forests on either side, with the ground beneath free of underbrush except for the rose and berry bushes in the more sunny openings near the streams. It looked like one grand, continuous park, with the half-dead pines covered with an inch of green moss, hiding all marks of death's decay.

"A dark, moving object ahead of us in the roadway suddenly appeared in full view and the jehu pulled in the reins to get a steady look ahead. Then he exclaimed with a strong oath, 'that damn thing ahead of us is a bear.' He called to the passengers to get their shooting irons ready for there might be trouble ahead. Those inside thought of the dreaded Indians and were greatly relieved to know that it was only a bear that caused the call to arms. The horses reared and plunged from instinctive fear and we gained only a little on the king of the American wilds.

"The driver lashed the poor brutes into a chase until there was grave fear that they would wheel suddenly backward and cause a serious accident. But the bear reached the river first, and by the time the stage was at the ford old Bruin was lifting his head out of the water away down on the opposite bank, where he emerged and shook his shaggy coat and scrambled into the brush.

"It was the only spirited event of the trip, and early in the afternoon we were in the great Montana garden of the Hell Gate river. It seemed a curious name to give to such a beautiful stream, but it comes from the black and intricate passage of the same name near Missoula. Missoula was not of enough importance to have a place on the map, but it was a productive section that has since made itself known to the world. Peaches, pears and melons—my, how good they were after a long famine of such luxuries!"

A pleasant picture, is it not? Riding down the canyon now, in one of the 60-mile-an-hour trains that traverse the route of the old stagecoach, it is not difficult to picture the canyon as it looked in those days. Here and there are some of the old giant-pines that have some way escaped the woodman. Again one sees long stretches of new forest, growing up to hide the scars left by the relentless advance of the lumberman. In the summer, the wild roses may yet be seen blossoming everywhere. If you know where to look for them you can see some relics of the old stagecoach days. There are some of them left, though the newest railway construction and the latest spring flood removed some of them which had endured until just a few years ago.

There are many farms scattered along the canyon now. Some of them were there in the stagecoach days, but most of them have come in the wake of the axeman and his clearing. The present beauty of the Hell Gate canyon is different from that which impressed the early traveler. The newness is gone, but there linger some of the old charm; the hills are there and the snowfed streams. The bear has hiked back into the mountain ledges, but one does not have to stray far from the beaten path to find himself in a deer country.

Verily, it is a wonderful trail, this which leads down Hell Gate canyon. It has felt the footfall of many a traveler, it has been the scene of many an event of stirring interest; in its span of 75 miles there has been much history written.

Indian, priest, prospector, explorer, engineer, freighter, fighter, fugitive, victor, vanquished—all have had places in the long procession which has moved up and down, for a full generation through Hell Gate canyon. The patter of moccasined feet have given way to the scraping of steel shoes against the rocks as the packtrain wound its way over the trail. The rattling stagecoach and the rumbling wagon have followed, only to give place, in turn, to the trains which now whirl over the newer steel trails. Into Gold creek, whose sands yielded the first Montana "colors," down to Bear gulch and on, through, to Cedar rushed the stampede of goldseekers along the Hell Gate trail. Over this trail, too, came the Black Robes, pioneers of pioneers, to bring the word of God to the Indians of the west. Along this trail came the railway engineers, seeking a coastward route. Here, later swarmed the builders and the railway became a fact.

Down Hell Gate canyon, too, galloped the last stern messengers dispatched by the Montana Vigilantes—galloped in the dark nor checked their course until the final chapter had been written in the tale of just vengeance and four forms that had once been men dangled from a crude gallows at old Hell Gate town.

Mining and lumber and horticulture in Montana, all date back to beginnings in Hell Gate canyon. Out of the discoveries and the experiments in Hell Gate there have come the great industries of the state—the hastened development and the sturdy population of a great state. There is no ride in Montana more interesting than the journey down Hell Gate canyon. It is interesting if you travel by rail, but it is specially interesting if you make the trip over the wagon road, taking time to look carefully as you journey over this historic ground. There is scarcely a mile of the trail through Hell Gate which is not associated with some important event in Montana history.

Really, there could be a big book written about the history of Hell Gate canyon. I don't propose to write a big book about it, but I think that the oldtrail jaunts for a considerable period this summer would better be taken over this much-traveled, little understood Hell Gate trail. There will be no rose trees arching over the road, but the whole trip will be haloed in pleasant memories.

January 27, 1912.

Granville Stuart

THE FIRST PAY GRAVEL

THE HELL GATE CANYON must be given the credit of furnishing the first "colors" which directed attention to the wealth of the bars in Montana's streams and gulches. To Granville Stuart and his brothers the credit is due for making known to the world the existence of gold in these streams, no matter whether or not they were the first to find the shining particles which denoted the presence of wealth. The discovery made by the Stuarts unquestionably hastened the development of Montana by two decades by attracting here the tide of goldseekers which had been sweeping to the coast and to the diggings in Idaho gulches. There is some controversy as to who was the actual discoverer of Montana gold, but there is no controversy at all as to where the discovery was made. It was in Hell Gate, the Canyon of First Things.

When I say that there is controversy over the matter of the individual who made the discovery, I do not mean that Mr. Stuart has ever sought to gain any laurels to which he was not entitled. He has always been frank in his statements that others had found gold before his party panned the sands in Gold creek or washed the gravel of Pioneer creek. But there have risen lately some iconoclasts who have sought to deride the assertion that it was the Stuarts who originally made known to the world the presence of paying gold values in Montana. It is they who have stirred whatever controversy there is. Their statements, I believe, are not worth consideration. Montana owes much to Granville Stuart, than whom no state ever had a more faithful or more accurate historian, and one of the items in the bill which he holds against the state which has been for so many ears his home, is the fact that it was his pen which summoned to Montana the rush of immigration which peopled the gulches and valleys many years ahead of the date when the natural course of settlement would have drifted this way.

It was on Gold creek or one of its tributaries that the first "colors" were found which established the claim of Montana to the title, "Treasure State." Here in upper Hell Gate canyon, was enacted the scene which was the initial movement in the great drama which was staged in western Montana in the days of the gold stampedes. It was one more of the incidents of history which fix the right of Hell Gate to be known as the Canyon of First Things. What a momentous day that was, when eager eyes watched the sediment in the bottom of that old gold pan!

Following each motion of the expert hand which alternately dipped the pan into the water and then swished around the mixture in the shallow container, these expectant eyes gleamed as the sediment in the pan diminished in quantity under the skillful manipulation of the hands which rocked it in the peculiar fashion of the man who knows how to pan gold. These eyes gleamed because they saw the black sand appear as the lighter stuff was washed away; then they glistened as they saw the specks of yellow appear in the mass of black. They knew they had found gold!

It is claimed that Father DeSmet and Father Ravalli early knew that there was gold in the streams of western Montana, but they kept the secret as they wished their Indian charges to become better prepared to withstand the contact with the stampede which was inevitable when it became known that Montana's bars were treasure-laden. I have talked with men who said they had heard the pioneer priests say that they had early found indications of the presence of gold in this region. Lieutenant Mullan is also cited as another of the possessors of early knowledge of the existence of gold here. Instances are given, too, of Indians who smoked pipes which were thickly studded with find gold, contained in the clay of which they were made. Lewis and Clark had found gold signs and some of the members of their expedition had been enthusiastic over some of their discoveries in this line; but they were not gold hunters and they did not make much of their find in the wilderness.

There is that other story of a mysterious, long-bearded man coming into Fort Benton in the earliest days of its existence with a sack of gold dust which he sold to the trader there. There is, too, a story reported by Lieutenant Bradley of Fort Missoula in 1875, in effect that he had been told of another unnamed east-side prospector of the fifties. Perhaps this was the same one. He is encountered wherever you go if you are seeking information as to the early history of Montana mining. But nobody knows who he was and nobody knew then where he got his gold. He is as mysterious as the Lost Cabin mine.

It is refreshing, in delving through the literature which deals with this subject, to encounter the perfect frankness with which Granville Stuart wrote of his discovery and the freedom with which he yields credit to all who had seen gold before he saw it in Montana sands. In his history of Montana, Joaquin Miller pays this tribute to Mr. Stuart:

"His (Stuart's) direct narrative untangles the skein where the threads so often cross and become entwined one with another; and where you would, but for this little book, find only confusion and tumultuous clashing of accounts, all is made as plain as a newly blazed trail. You follow this trail confidently, for it is as true on its face as the mint mark on Montana gold, which he was along with those who were with him, really the first to discover."

And, farther on in his history, the great Californian writes: "You will observe how generously he gives the credit of the discovery of gold in Montana to the credit of another. But I repeat that the verdict of time will tell the coming generations that James and Granville Stuart and their immediate following, who persisted in their work and finally pushed reluctant fortunes to the wall, were the real first finders of gold in paying quantities at the feet of 'The Shining Mountains.'"

I have before me a copy of a letter which Granville Stuart wrote in 1875, telling of the incidents which led to the discovery of gold in Montana. It is an interesting story and it is best told in the straightforward style of the old pioneer, now the second-oldest citizen of Montana in point of residence. It is not only intensely interesting, but it gives an insight into the character of the man, revealing as it does his utter unselfishness. Nowhere does he endeavor to direct all the limelight to himself; he freely gives to others whatever credit is their due for their part in the discovery which was destined to make Montana quickly great and wonderfully rich. Mr. Stuart says, in this letter, which was written to the New Northwest, published in Deer Lodge:

"In the year 1852 a half-breed named Francois, but who was known among his associates by the name of Benetsee, and who had just returned from California to the Rocky mountains, began to prospect on what is now known as Gold creek, in Deer Lodge county, and found light float gold; but, as his prospecting was necessarily of a very superficial character, he found no mines that would pay. The fact of gold being found there, however, became noised about among the few mountaineers still in the country, and in the spring of 1856 a party, among whom were Robert Hereford, late of Helena, John Saunders, called "Long John," (who could throw a stone with almost the force and precision of a rifle ball), Bill Madison and one or two others, who were passing 'Benetsee' creek on their way to Salt Lake from the Bitter Root valley, where they had spent the winter trading with the Indians and prospecting a little, found more gold than had been obtained by Benetsee. One piece weighed about 10 cents, and they gave it to old Captain Grant, who used to show it, up to the time of his death in 1862, as the first piece of gold found in the country.

"The matter rested here until the spring of 1858 when Thomas Adams (now of Washington city), Reece Anderson, E. H.

Burr, John H. Powell and James and Granville Stuart searched for gold in that vicinity and found as high as 10 cents to the pan of gravel; but, as they had neither provisions (they were living on wild meat straight, without salt) nor tools, they could not accomplish anything, more especially as the Blackfeet stole four of their horses and so harassed them that they abandoned the country for a time, returning, however, in the fall of 1860, firm in the faith that this was a rich gold country. In the meantime, during the summer of 1860, a mining enthusiast named Henry Thomas (but who, as soon as his peculiarities became known, was designated as 'Gold Tom,' by which he ever afterwards went), came by the way of Pend d'Oreille lake and began to prospect on Benetsee creek about one mile west of where Pioneer City now stands. Almost unaided, he sank a shaft over thirty feet deep in the glacial detritus along the creek, getting a little gold all the way down. He also washed some on the surface at this point during this and the following summer, but only made about $1.50 a day, owing to the great disadvantage under which he worked. His windlass and four little sluice boxes, hewed out with an axe and now fast falling into decay may still be seen where he worked. Alas! poor Tom! The writer lost sight of him in '66 or '67 and often wonders if he fell a victime to the ignus fatui of Coeur d'Alene, Peace River, Stickeen, Cassiar, White Pine, Pioche, Yellowstone, and last, but not least, the Black Hills, and, wherever he may be, may fortune smile upon him with a broader grin than fell to the lot of any of the pioneers at 'Pioneer Creek' in 1860-1-2. He usually preferred to be alone, and would spend days and weeks among the mountains with no other companions than his horses and trusty rifle; yet he was not at all misanthropic. In the fall of 1860 and spring of 1861 Anderson and the Stuarts prospected in the dry gulches, putting into Benetsee creek and found what they considered good paying mines, but they did little towards working them that season for two reasons: First, they had very few and imperfect tools and no lumber until they could get it whipsawed; and second, all the party except the writer went to Fort Benton for the purpose of purchasing supplies from the steamboats expected up the river that year. The one boat (The Chippeway) that started up was burned near the mouth of Milk river, and the summer was lost waiting for her. On this boat were William Graham of Philipsburg and Frank L. Worden of Missoula. Early in the spring of 1862 the Stuarts, Adams, Burr and Powell began to mine, having had lumber sawed by hand at 10 cents a foot, and picks and shovels packed up from Walla Walla, 425 miles distant, by Worden and Higgins' train, that brought their goods to Hell Gate, and on the eighth day of May they set the first string of sluices ever used in Montana, and began to mine by the old pick and shovel process. In 1861 the Stuarts had written to their brother Thomas, who was in Colorado, to come out here, as they thought this a better and richer country than that, which opinion, by the way, they have seen no reason to change, and still adhere to. Thomas showed the letter to many friends of his, and the result was that quite a number left there in the spring of 1862 for Deer Lodge. The first of these, a party of 12, arrived at Pioneer on the twentieth of June, and among them was J. M. Bozeman, who was murdered by the Indians on the Yellowstone in 1867, and after whom the flourishing town of Bozeman, in Gallatin valley was named. The party found good prospects in a branch of the Benetsee, or Gold Creek, as it now began to be called, which branch took the name of Pike's Peak gulch, from the fact of the discoverers being from Pike's Peak, as Colorado was then generally called. Other parties also began to straggle in from Pike's Peak and Utah, and about the 29th of June Samuel T. Hauser, Frank Louthan, John Alt and W. B. Dance arrived, being the advance guard of a number who came up on the steamers from St. Louis, and who were on their way to Florence, in the Salmon river mines, not having heard of the discoveries at Gold Creek, where, however, many of them stopped, and are now among our oldest and most respected citizens."

And so it came to pass. As you ride through Hell Gate canyon in this year of 1912, seated comfortably in the train which speeds through historic scenes, you may observe, if you will, the turbid current of Gold creek as it flows down into the Hell Gate. In the spring and summer season the flow of this historic stream is yellow with the washings from the placer camps above, for it is true that there are yet miners working the gravel which yielded the first Montana "colors." In old Pioneer, in Pike's Peak, in the gulch below Yamhill—in these first diggings of Montana, there are yet men taking out gold. Verily, "the first shall be last."

When I first visited the Pioneer diggings, there yet were standing the old sluice boxes which had been installed when the first mining was done there. Perhaps some trace of the old workings yet remains; there was some of the old plant to be seen when I was last at the camp, a few years ago. Crude were the beginnings but they led to greater things; there followed the modest discovery on Gold creek, the wonderfully rich finds in Alder, Last Chance, Cedar and Bear—bars which yielded millions and from some of which, nuggets and dust are even now being taken. It was one of the great first things—this casual prospect work by Granville Stuart.

It was not all good, however, which came with the influx of white population after the discovery of gold. Black sheep dwell in every fold and there were plenty of them in the flock of humans which surged into the gold-bearing valleys and gulches of Montana. The story is familiar of how the flock purged itself; the history of the Montana Vigilantes is one of the most thrilling narratives ever written. In this connection it is interesting to note that one of the first—if not the very first—miners' court was held on Gold creek. In the month of July, 1862, an old Frenchman stole some horses and other property from the Gold creek settlers. James Stuart and a neighbor pursued the thief and overtook him on Prickly Pear creek, below Helena's present location. His captors returned to camp with him and he was given a trial before a court of miners. His guilt was clearly established but he expressed repentance so profound that the regulation penalty for horse-stealing was not enforced. Instead, the old fellow was given 12 hours' time in which to get out of the country, and, when the miners came to consider his age and his condition of utter destitution, they—in court assembled—subscribed $15 to give him a start. The cash donation was supplemented with a generous gift of provisions and the old man left the district forever.

Other gulches yielded greater riches; other camps drew greater crowds; other communities developed greater crimes than the offense of this old Frenchman; other courts imposed greater sentences; Montana became a country of superlatives as the development of her placer diggings went on. The pick became the successor to the pan as the ledge replaced the gravel as the source of gold. Great cities took the place of primitive camps. Established courts dispensed justice in the stead of the Vigilante tribunal—more formally, perhaps, but never more effectively. Montana became a state with all a state's prerogatives. The growth was rapid and substantial. But it all dates back to the day when the Stuarts and their companions washed out the "colors" which gave them the assurance that there was vast treasure locked in the hills of Montana—hidden in "The Shining Mountains."

If I were an artist—I presume every man has ideas which he believes would make great paintings and longs for the ability to depict them—if I were an artist, there are two pictures which I would like to paint. One of these would be the raising of the Cross of Christ in the Bitter Root valley, when Father DeSmet in 1841 brought the message of the Gospel to the Indians of the mountains. The other would be the scene in the Canyon of First Things, when those pioneers washed out the first "colors" from the gravel on Gold creek and gave to the world a new treasure house which has yielded its millions and which has given greatness to a new state. I like to think of those young men, earnest and eager, as they leaned over the man with the pan, watching him to see what his expert touch would prove as to the sands of the beautiful stream along which they stood. To me it is one of the wonderfully interesting scenes in all history. To me it possesses a special fascination. To me it seems to be the one picture which marks the beginning of Montana—Montana, prepared by the other picture, for the great future which is hers.

Out from Hell Gate canyon sped the news of new gold. Back came the response in the form of strong, active, earnest men. Then out from Hell Gate canyon these men scattered and found other gulches rich in dust. The farmer came and the manufacturer; the stage coach and the railway. A great state has grown from that discovery in the Canyon of First Things.

February 10, 1912.

Entrance to Hell Gate Canyon—From a Sketch for Stevens' Report in 1855.

STARTING THINGS FOR MONTANA

WE ARE now entering into an interesting anniversary period in Montana. This month and this year are the semi-centennial dates for a good many important events in this state's history. It is half a century since the individuality of this region became in some measure established. February, 1862, was a noteworthy month because it gave the first white child born upon Montana soil. March, 1862, brought the first white wedding upon Montana ground, and the same month furnished the first trial by law. And all of these important events occurred at old Hell Gate town, the western end of the Canyon of First Things.

We of the western slope of Montana should not be blamed if we are sometimes a bit boastful of the part which our delightful region played in the beginnings of Montana history. It may seem like too much reiteration for me to refer so frequently in these stories to the Canyon of First Things, but when the history of Hell Gate canyon is considered, there is so much of it which represents the beginnings of things which have become great in the development of the state, that I am sure the return to these items of important history will not be found wearisome. In the pursuit of these old trails, we have followed the track of the pioneer placer miners of Montana; we have traced the path of some of the early lumbermen; these have taken us through the windings of the Canyon of First Things and the journeys have suggested not a few byways which we may further pursue with interest and, I hope, with some degree of profit.

In the jaunts we have taken over the old Hell Gate trail, through the Canyon of First Things, we have found "signs" which warrant a further exploration of this wonderful old trail, along which are scattered so many rich incidents in Montana history that we find ourselves treasure-trove. This beautiful old canyon, now a busy thoroughfare of modern commerce, is peopled with figures of the past which move before us and beckon us on; they invite excursions that will lead our feet into paths which have long been untrodden but which were one time the arteries through which poured the new life which was being injected into the wilderness for the evolution of a new state, for the making of a new people.

In one of these trips over old trails, we spent a day in old Hell Gate town. This village marked the western end of the trail which in those days led through the Canyon of First Things. From Hell Gate three old trails led west and south—one over the Coeur d'Alene pass, one through the Coriacan defile and one into the Bitter Root valley. But the one way east was through the wonderful canyon which stretched its way through the rugged cleft in the mountain wall—the trail which led to the first things which give such fascinating interest to the history of the western region of Montana.

While the canyon itself contributed many of these interesting incidents, the old town which was its western terminal, must be credited with no small part in getting the civilization of Montana started in the right direction.

Almost within the limits of this little, old town was born the first white child to see the light in Montana. Here, too, was solemnized the first wedding of white people to be performed in Montana. The first trial of a lawsuit to be held in Montana was in this old town. Also the first saloon to be established in Montana was built here, a fact which is here mentioned because that saloon building furnished the stage setting for some of the stirring scenes and some of the notable events which were here enacted in later months.

It will be remembered, perhaps, that the second building erected in the town of Hell Gate was P. J. Bolte's saloon. That was in 1861. The saloon business was not very good and Bolte lasted less than a year. But in that year his place was immortalized. It was transformed by the course of events into the first court of justice in the great state of Montana. Just what happened to Bolte in the long run is not quite clear, but the records show plainly that his saloon is entitled to high place in Montana's hall of fame.

It would be fine if it could be recorded that Bolte's saloon was permanently transfigured into a palace of justice, but this cannot be said truthfully. Bolte himself didn't last long in the saloon business, it is true, and he closed his gin mill not long after the memorable session of justice was held. Bolte made his exit, as far as local records show, but he left his building behind him and its reappearance in the activities of the town was as the rendezvous of the northern branch of the road agents, which inevitably led to its selection as the scene of the last gala performance of the Vigilantes when they galloped down the canyon from Alder and did their last job of cleaning house. In our former visit at Hell Gate, we got a glimpse of this lively action; one of these days we may see it in detail; but this jaunt has to do with some of the first things which happened in Hell Gate and the court of justice which was held in Bolte's saloon was one of them.

Looking back, just for a moment, over our own trail, it will be recalled that last week we saw the first miners' court being held in the Canyon of First Things. That was in 1862—in the summer. The miners on Gold creek held a court of their own and tried a Frenchman who had stolen some of their horses. They convicted him and then raised money enough to enable him to get out of the country. But this was not the first court held in Montana. In March of that same year, in Bolte's saloon in Hell Gate, had been held a regular court session. It was the first tribunal of any sort ever held upon Montana soil unless we count the courtmartial which Captains Lewis and Clark held while they were marching through this territory, when they convicted and whipped one of their soldiers.

It seems, however, to be the common opinion of the chroniclers of Montana history that the tribunal held in Bolte's Hell Gate saloon was the first court held in this state. It was in March. The incident is one which has not been given, it seems to me, the importance it should have in the records of our state.

Bolte's saloon was a little, log building. It was located not far from the Worden-Higgins store, which was the first building erected in the camp and the first store to be built in the state. There was nothing impressive about the structure. It was built of cottonwood logs, as were all of Hell Gate's houses. It had one door in front. Its windows were diminutive. Even in daylight, the interior was not bright. Yet this dingy interior was the scene of the first formal administration of justice in Montana. The scene was another of those which would form the subjects of powerful historic paintings.

Along the side of the little building extended the rude bar. In the rear were two or three crude tables where the patrons of the place played cards. A stone fireplace furnished the heat and supplemented the light which sifted in through the windows. There was nothing of the dignity and impressiveness of the modern temple of justice here, but the sequel showed that justice is not dependent upon frescoed walls or carved furniture for its right administration. I presume some of our recent writers upon the judiciary of Montana would say that the quality of the justice which was dispensed in this rude building, temporarily transformed into a courtroom, was better than a good deal which has been administered since that time in this state.

Those who are in any way familiar with the history of western Montana will not be surprised to know that Baron O'Keeffe was one of the parties of this first Montana trial. He was a famous litigant and, at this time, he had been in Montana long enough to have demonstrated his scrapping ability. When matters had become more settled in Missoula county and it was possible to go to court more easily than it was in 1862, the baron kept the courts busy, for he was jealous of his rights and he resented any infringement upon them.

Henry Brooks was the justice of the peace. He held a commission presumably under the laws of Washington; there was something a little mysterious about that commission, but it went, just the same, and there seems to have been no serious flaw in it. If there had been, the keen eye of The O'Keeffe would surely have discovered it, as the baron was a stickler for technicalities. The official duties of Brooks consisted principally in performing the marriage ceremony. His judicial functions were not often invoked. I don't know whether or not he ever tried any other case than this, but this was enough to make his name endure in the history of Montana, and it makes the trip over the Hell Gate trail more interesting.

The complaining witness in this first trial was a Frenchman, whose name was Tin Cup Joe. Probably he had another name, but there is no record of it, and even Judge Woody does not remember what it was. When his memory fails, I am not one to waste time in the endeavor to discover details that he has forgotten. Tin Cup Joe had some horses and he accused Baron O'Keeffe of having ill-treated one of the animals so seriously as to cause its death. There were no laws in the statutes of Washington then to provide a penalty for cruelty to animals or the baron would probably have appeared as defendant in a criminal action.

It seems that Tin Cup Joe was not particularly outraged by the cruelty which he alleged had been practiced upon his horse; he was aggrieved to the extent of the value which he placed upon the animal and he brought suit to recover the sum of $40. His complaint alleged that The O'Keeffe had beaten the horse with a fork handle and had then pushed the animal into a hole, the dual assault having inflicted injuries so severe that the poor horse died. The only place which Justice Brooks could find for holding court was Bolte's saloon, and there he set up his tribunal. There Baron O'Keeffe was brought before the bar—but not Bolte's bar. The complaint was read to him in due form, and he demanded a jury trial. Thereupon, the justice impaneled a jury of six good men and true.

"I do not remember all of the jurors," said Judge Woody in telling me the story of this case, "but one of them was A. Sterny Blake, and another was W. B. S. Higgins. Another was Bart Henderson, who afterward went to the Yellowstone country." W. B. S. Higgins was not a relative of Captain Higgins, but he had built the first residence in Hell Gate and he was for years prominently identified with the affairs of Missoula county. Sterny Blake was well known all over western Montana. He settled finally near Victor, where he died recently; he was a member of the legislature from Missoula county and in other ways served the community usefully.

Judge Woody acted as attorney for the plaintiff. Baron O'Keeffe conducted his own case. The initial stages of the trial progressed without incident and with due regard for the form and the dignity of the law. It was when the cross-questioning began that the harmony of the occasion was disturbed. The baron took exception to the course of the young attorney for the plaintiff. The attorney was not to be bluffed any more in those days than he is now, and he retorted in kind. The court was unable to maintain order, and the din of charge and counter-charge became violent.

The little room was crowded. The baron had a considerable retinue of adherents and the folks around Hell Gate were for the most part friends of Woody. The interest of the crowd became intense. The repartee between the contenders finally passed the bounds of self-restraint and The O'Keeffe made a pass at his opponent. Woody countered and came back with a good, stiff punch.

It was like a spark in a keg of powder. The pent-up excitement of the crowd that packed Bolte's transformed saloon needed only the sound of a blow to break it loose. In an instant there was pandemonium. The partisans of the two principals fought because they wanted to. The innocent bystanders fought because they had to; there was no room for anything else. It was just the sort of melee that delighted the heart of the sturdy scion of Ireland's nobility and he snorted like a war-horse.

When the battle ended, it was a draw. The settling of the dust and the parting of the combatants disclosed the fact that the court and the jury had been successful in fighting their way out of the crowd, out of the building and out of sight. It looked very much as if the trial could not proceed. There was no court and the jury was missing.

The erstwhile combatants now became fellows in an earnest quest for the missing representatives of the law. Fortunately, there were not many buildings in Hell Gate and the search was ultimately successful. The court was found nursing some bruises in the Worden store—somewhat peeved, but too flustered to think of the prerogative of imposing a penalty for contempt. Some of the jurors were also in the store. Others were in their homes and were routed out and brought back to Bolte's.

The trial proceeded in due form without further interruption. The jury retired and was not long in its deliberations. The verdict gave Tin Cup Joe the full $40 for which he sued, and also attached the costs of the suit to the defendant. This brought the total assessment against Baron O'Keeffe up to $90.

Then there was more trouble. The baron declared he had been outraged and that the whole proceeding was a travesty upon justice. He would appeal, he said, and made preparations to take the case to a higher court. But the nearest district court was in Colville, three hundred miles away, and the expense of the appeal and a trial at Colville would be so great that he couldn't take the chance of losing again. So he paid up.

Thus ended the first trial in Montana. The building in which it was held has long since disappeared. Of old Hell Gate there remains but the little old log building which was the first Worden store. But the site is yet pointed out, and it is a notable spot in Montana's history. We are inclined to laugh, of course, at the ludicrous features of this primitive dispensation of justice, and it must be admitted that the story gives the trial a farcical aspect. But read the story again and you will note that the jury returned its verdict and that the loser paid. That is the main thing.

I asked Judge Woody what became of Justice Brooks. "He was assassinated," said the judge. "In 1865, over in Uncle Ben's gulch, near Blackfoot City, some unknown person fired a shot through a glass door, behind which Brooks was standing, and killed him. Nobody was able to tell who fired the shot or why it was fired. It was a complete mystery. Brooks had no personal enemies that we ever knew of."

It was Brooks who performed the first marriage ceremony for white people in Montana. This was also at Hell Gate and was in the same month that he presided at the trial in Bolte's saloon. On March 5, Brooks united in the bonds of matrimony George P. White and Mrs. Josephine Meininger. His commission as justice gave him this authority. His neighbors, in recognition of the importance of the event, dubbed him "Bishop," and as "Bishop Brooks" he was always known after that.

The Whites lived below Hell Gate for many years; this first Montana wedding was the beginning of a happy union. It is of record that the first Montana wedding did not lead to a divorce.

It was in 1862, but a month earlier than these other first events, that the first white child was born in Montana. February 13, 1862, Jefferson Henry Pelky was born in Grass Valley, just below Hell Gate. He is living in Missoula now. The other day he registered at the Missoula county court house for the elections this year. He has lived all his life either in Washington or Montana, and is well known hereabouts.

It was fifty years ago that these things happened—these important first things. It is half a century this week since the first white child was born upon Montana soil. Next month it will be half a century since the first marriage ceremony was performed between whites; next month, too, it will be half a century since the first formal trial was held here.

Fifty years is not a long span, yet how much has transpired in this great region. From these first things, how much has developed. Here in this Hell Gate ronde were enacted only fifty years ago these first events of their kind in Montana. From that rude, little court have grown our present tribunals; that first white wedding has been followed by many other happy unions; there have been other boys born. But the real home life of the state dates back to those beginnings in this valley. The civilization of the state may be said to date back to those beginnings.

There is no trail—old or new—which possesses greater interest in its associations than this one which leads down through the Canyon of First Things. It has been interesting to me to trace back the path which leads from those beginnings to the present. I hope it is interesting to those who read these little stories. Clustered in places—scattered in others—along this famous old trail, there are many more incidents which have left their lasting imprint upon the history of our state and upon the civilization of our people. If we continue these journeys over old Montana trails, I do not know of any trips that we can take which will be more intensely interesting than some of those which follow the old Hell Gate trail or some of its byways. We are delightfully situated here for the pleasant study of the local phases of Montana history. There are many other trips than those we have taken. I have enjoyed them; I hope others have had the same pleasure in them.

February 17, 1912.

Old Worden Store at Hell Gate

A JOURNEY'S END

THE Vigilantes of Montana laid the cornerstone of the structure of justice in the state. Their quick, decisive action transformed the new settlements from a condition of chaos into a state of orderliness. They made human life safe and they insured protection of property. They wrought this transformation with almost incredible swiftness. Once their minds had been made up to clean house, they cleaned house. Ridgepoles, trees, corral gates—whatever were handy—were extemporized as gallows frames, and from them dangled lifeless forms which, but a few days before, had been animate with all the evil and devilishness that could be devised by minds steeped in crime. Swift and sure was the justice which was dealt out by the Vigilante courts and when its dispensation had been ended, Montana was clean.

Over Montana trails galloped the avenging troop, fleet, determined and brave. When these trails had been traversed by this avenging horde, these trails were clean. There was safety assured to such as might travel after. The right to live had been re-established; the right to hold property had been vindicated; Montana's reign of terror was at an end. The last night ride which the Vigilantes made was down the old trail to Hell Gate. Through the darkness they rode, and swiftly, that no warning might precede them. Relentlessly they galloped along the trail from Cottonwood, nor paused longer than was necessary to come upon their quarry unsuspected. And their ride was not in vain.

It is interesting to note that the very building which has been the scene of the first trial by jury, under statute law, in Montana, was the scene, also, of the last of the Vigilante executions. Bolte, who built this saloon and who operated it at the time Justice Brooks commandeered it for a court room, didn't last long in the saloon business at Hell Gate. After a year of endeavor properly to irrigate the population of western Montana, he gave it up as a bad job and Hell Gate became a dry town.

Came then Cyrus Skinner, bad man and murderer, northern agent for the organized band of desperadoes, and took possession of Bolte's place, where he conducted a saloon and roadhouse which soon became the rendezvous of suspicious characters. It was in 1862 that Bolte quit the business; it was a year later that Skinner came. Not much was known of him by the Hell Gate people, but they could easily form their estimate of his caliber. It was not the custom in those days to be too inquisitive as to a man's antecedents. If he behaved himself, there would be no questions asked. But it was soon evident that Skinner was not a desirable citizen. However, there was nothing in particular that the Hell Gate people could charge against him and he was allowed to conduct his shady resort. He was left pretty much alone by the townspeople, but he had always some strangers loafing about his place and he didn't seem to miss the company of the home folks.

The story of the beginning of the Vigilante operation is familiar history. The placer camps had been ridded of their undesirables and discoveries had been made which pointed to the presence of accomplices of the road agents in Hell Gate. A flying squadron of cavalry was organized to sweep through the outlying camps to gather in the stragglers of the road-agent combination. In the troop which rode toward Hell Gate by way of Deer Lodge, there were eight tried men. Swiftly they rode and, wherever they encountered one of the road agents' men, there was a trial, a vote and an execution. On Cottonwood they had executed two men. Then, with a farmer named Jemmy Allen as their guide, they galloped out of Deer Lodge and swung into the trail to Hell Gate. It was January, cold and dark. As we ride down through Hell Gate canyon now, comfortable in steam-heated cars, we do not realize the discomforts of that ride. There was a lot of snow that winter and the weather was intensely cold. Hell Gate canyon was a dense forest in those days. Into its shadows the Vigilantes rode. At the other end of the Hell Gate trail they expected to find the men they sought.

They had left Deer Lodge in the night. At the very outset, the horse of one of them broke through the ice, crossing Deer Lodge river, and his rider was rescued with difficulty. He had been placed on a fleet horse and had galloped to the Allen ranch, where the entire party halted, later, for the rest of the night. Early next morning the little cavalcade was on the trail again. The snow in the canyon was three feet deep and progress was slow that day. Only about sixteen miles were covered. Camp was made in the snow and next morning a march was made to the camp of the Mullan road workmen. Here was welcome and shelter for another night, and the hardy riders needed it.

Up at daylight and in their saddles, the Vigilantes pushed on through the snow. They rode to the mouth of Hell Gate canyon and rested beside Rattlesnake creek, in hiding, until dark.

Then they rode down toward Hell Gate town. Their guide halted the troop about two hundred yards from the village and went forward to investigate. Returning, he reported that there was evidently no suspicion of the presence of the avenging party. Skinner was at his saloon and things seemed to be running just as usual.

There was a hurried conference and the men from Alder gulch mounted. It was their intention to take Skinner completely by surprise, and they entered the village with their horses on the dead run. Either their speed was too great or else, in the darkness they made a mistake—for they galloped right past the Skinner place and were some distance beyond before they discovered their mistake. They turned quickly and rode back, but the noise of their charge had attracted attention and Skinner stood in the doorway of his saloon as they came up.

He was evidently, even then, unsuspicious. For he was taken completely off his guard. The saloon was promptly surrounded and Skinner was told to throw up his hands. He complied. His woman evidently did not even then realize what was going on; she seemed to think the place was being robbed, for, when she was commanded to hold up her hands, too, she remarked that the visitors must have learned that from the Bannack stage folks. Skinner was disarmed and bound.

Alex Carter, another of the road agents who was sought, was found in the house next to Skinner's. He was lying in a drunken stupor on a lounge when the vigilantes entered; they covered him at once and took his pistol from him. He was securely bound before he came to his senses; when he realized what had happened, he asked for a smoke and then inquired for news. He was told of what had been going on and was given the names of the men who had been hanged. He nodded as name after name was called off and, when the narration was ended, he said: "All right; not an innocent man hung yet."

Carter and Skinner were taken to the Higgins store and were tried there. The trial lasted three hours, and while it was in progress Skinner's woman appeared and sought to intercede for him. She was sent back home under guard. This was fortunate, as the escort discovered, lying wounded in the Skinner house, Johnny Cooper, one of the most-wanted of the whole band of Montana desperadoes. He had been shot in three places in a quarrel with Carter the night before; he said Carter had tried to steal his pistol. Cooper was at once secured and placed so he could do no harm. One of the Vigilantes had known Cooper over the range and identified him.

Meanwhile, in the Higgins store, the trial of Skinner and Carter was going on. Carter admitted that he, with Ives and Irwin, had driven off a bunch of horses, but he denied that he had been a party to the murder of the herder of the horses, though this was proved during the trial. He remained steadfast in his refusal to confess to his participation in the Ives stage robberies and murders, but his part in these crimes was so well known that there was no trouble in bringing conclusive proof. Skinner would make no admission at all. He stood pat.

It was midnight of the night of January 25 before the trial ended. The evidence had all been heard; the cases had been discussed by the members of the tribunal and the time had come for the vote which was to decide the fate of the two prisoners. It must have been a dramatic scene. We are told that there was no undue haste. Everything was as deliberate as would be the proceedings of a modern court of justice.

The little room of the store was dimly lighted. In its center sat the men who were on trial. Facing them were the members of the group which constituted court, jury, sheriff and executioner—if need be. Another moment would tell the wretches in the center whether they would be merely banished from the territory or would be exiled to eternity.

There was a pause. The president of the court announced that the vote would be taken by members of the court stepping to one side of the room or to the other. No man, however nerved to duty by the consciousness that he is punishing the worker of the most dastardly crime, steps blithely to vote the death penalty. So these men who had ridden desperately through the snowy night to capture the thieves and murderers before them, now hesitated when it came to the final act in the trial.

One of the jury moved toward the side of the store which had been designated as the position of those whose vote was "Guilty." Another followed him and another. Then it was easier. The spell of the occasion was broken. There was a movement and every man of the jury took place where his very position spoke the fateful word, though he uttered no sound.

What a tense moment that must have been which preceded the movement of the first juror. How those wretches, facing certain death yet hoping that at the very last something might intervene, must have gazed at the men who held their lives in their hands. How they must have scanned the faces of their judges, eagerly hoping to discover there some ray of mercy. Villains though they were, villains of the deepest dye, one can but sympathize with them as they looked at face after face of the stern men before them. And then, when hope went glimmering, how their muscles must have stiffened, how their teeth must have set, in an effort to maintain some show of bravado even to the end.

Guilty—that was the verdict, and there was no recommendation for mercy. It was the end. These two murderers had shown no mercy to their victims; they had shot down men in cold blood, robbing their bodies and driving away their stock with perfect indifference. It was meet that they should be dealt with exactly as they had dealt with others. And so they were.

Out into the night the condemned men were led. There were no trees which could be used as a gallows; there was no high building which could be extemporized into a scaffold. Torches were made and lighted and by their flickering light the men were conducted to the Higgins corral, below the store. Two stout poles were planted so as to be supported by the corrall fence, over which they leaned. Some boxes were brought from the store to serve as drops.

Upon these boxes Skinner and Carter were made to step. From them they jumped into another world. The ropes stretched taut; the poles sprung; there was a convulsive struggle and two of the black band had gone to join their fellows. The improvised gallows had done its work well.

There was short shrift for these two men. The blackest rascal of them all was yet to be hanged. Back there in Skinner's house lay Johnny Cooper, wounded perhaps unto death, but not to die of those wounds. A shorter route across the Great Divide had been discovered upon the journey in which there is no back trail.

As Johnny Cooper was a bigger rascal than the others, he had been reserved for a separate trial, that the others might not get any of the worst of it by association with him. Cooper had been one of the lieutenants of the notorious Ives. He and Carter had been ready to start for Canada the night before the Vigilantes came, but they quarreled, Cooper said, over the gun and Cooper had been shot. Their pack was found and their horses, all ready.

Cooper, as has been said, was recognized by a man who had known him over the divide. This man testified against him and, though Cooper steadfastly denied all the evidence, it was substantiated by the previous confessions of others of the gang. His conduct in and around Hell Gate added strength to the other testimony; he had taken horses; had blackmailed a Frenchman out of a considerable sum of gold; had sought to marry this same Frenchman's young daughter and had been threatening when refused. The vote for his conviction was unanimous. He was hanged at the Higgins corral, as Skinner and Carter had been. Hell had another guest.

As far as I know, the records of the Vigilantes do not show what became of Nelly, Skinner's woman. Nor does the history of Hell Gate contain further mention of her that I have discovered. She is the pitiful figure in this scene of vengeance. A bit of human flotsam, it is true; a scarlet woman, I grant; shunned by the world, of course, but she was loyal to her consort. To the last she sought to save him from his inevitable fate. The

Vigilantes had no terrors for her—if only she could save the worthless neck of Skinner. Perhaps she stood out there in the darkness watching with fascinated, horror-stricken eyes the tragedy being enacted there in the glare of the torches, while all about was snow and winter. We do not know. She was there and she was loyal—that we do know. Unfortunate though she was—let us forget all but her loyalty and her devotion.

Yet other work remained for the troop before morning. If they waited it would be too late; the news of their night's work would be all through the valley as soon as it was light. There were some others of the gang to be captured, and it was known that they were in the valley somewhere. Three men hanged at Hell Gate, the Vigilantes mounted again and galloped off through the night to the entrance of the Coriacan defile, where the cabin of Baron O'Keeffe was built. There they found Bob Zachery. Of the incidents of this capture, I have already written in another of these stories. Baron O'Keeffe was roused from slumber; he thought he was being robbed; he did not know that the man in his house was a road agent; when he realized it and understood the purpose of the visit, he begged that the execution be pulled off somewhere else, as he did not want to have any ghosts about his place. So Bob Zachery was taken away and hanged. George Shears was found at the Van Dorn ranch and hanged. Bill Graves was found early next day up in the Bitter Root valley. He was a road agent, a gun man and an all-around bad fellow—but he was taken and hanged. He went across the Great Divide alone, though he had always boasted that he would take a Vigilante or two with him when he went.

Next day, the little troop of Vigilantes galloped off again through the snow into the forest that filled the Canyon of First Things. No need to hurry now. The work was done for which these men had ridden through the wintry forest. The homeward trip might be leisurely taken. There was nobody ahead of them now who would flee if informed that they were coming. They had written another chapter in the history of Montana's housecleaning. They had written it vigorously and so plainly that all might read. They had served another warning that the men who lived in Montana must be decent.

Three dangling forms at the Higgins corral had been left as a sign that the law must be obeyed. Three other bodies, strung up later, added emphasis to the message. It could not be mistaken. So well had these men done their work that there was no more of the sort to be done in Montana at that time, save for the one or two isolated cases which called for severe action. But the final chapter in the history of the Vigilantes had been written. The last of the villains had been run to earth. The last names had been checked off the list. Montana was made clean.

Hell Gate buzzed with excitement. It had been through the most stirring hours of its whole history; there had been much crowded into that one night. And when the Vigilantes rode away there were no mourners in the little town—none unless it was that woman of Skinner's. We do not know of her grief; we can only imagine it from the devotion which she displayed in the hour of peril for her man.

Soon there were four graves in the field below Hell Gate. There was never a headstone set up at any one of them. Less than ten years ago their mounds might be seen, but lately the disc harrow and the gang plow have leveled them, and wheat grows where road agents were planted.

The horses which belonged to the men who were hanged were sold to pay the debts which these men owed in the community. So were their other effects. The pack which Cooper and Carter had tied to their horse just before the quarrel, contained provisions which they had obtained from Higgins' store. It was shown that they had not paid for the goods; Captain Higgins had been willing to let them have the stuff if they would get out of the country. When the Vigilantes were told this, they paid Higgins the value of the supplies.

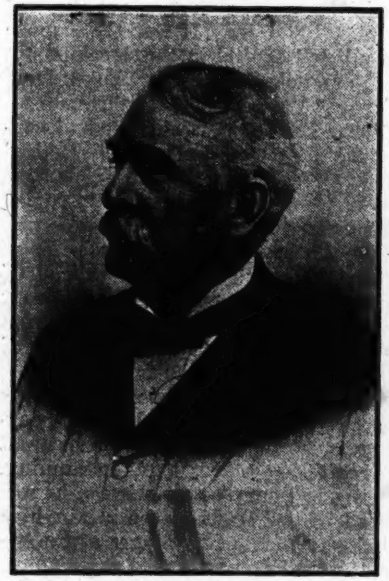
So in Hell Gate, where was held the first trial by law in Montana, there was also held the last of the Vigilante courts, unless we count as sessions those later, isolated cases. This was the last real "killing" by the miners' tribunal. Up at the other end of Hell Gate canyon, as we have previously seen, there had been held, two years earlier than this, the first session of this miners' court. Now, at the other end of the canyon, was the last of those memorable trials. It furnishes one of the most interesting chapters in the fascinating story of the Canyon of First Things.

February 24, 1912.

The Great Falls —Photo by Elrod.

THE MAN WHO LOOKED AHEAD

IF, OFFHAND, you were to ask a Great Falls citizen who discovered the great falls of the Missouri, he would tell you—also offhand—that it was Paris Gibson. If you were to tell him that your history gave the name of a different discoverer, the Great Falls citizen would, on second thought, admit that Lewis and Clark had something to do with it, but he would insist that Senator Gibson showed them the way to the falls or they would never have found them. Such is the admiration which Great Falls holds for her first citizen, Senator Paris Gibson. It is beautiful and it is deserved—this admiration. It is not often given, however, to a man to live to receive the homage of his townsmen to the degree that it has been the good fortune of Mr. Gibson to enjoy. Usually, there is a bronze statue somewhere, with a tablet reciting the virtues and the achievements of the man whose memorial it is—but this comes after the man is dead and it does him no good.



Paris Gibson

In the case of Senator Gibson, however, it is a long look ahead to the bronze statue—for he is hale and hearty—and he is living to see his ideals realized and his fondest hopes fulfilled. Where, years ago, he found a bare and treeless plain, there is now a beautiful city with magnificent parks and long, shaded streets. Where he found a broad prairie bearing naught but bunch grass, there are now fields of oats, wheat and flax which are establishing world-records for production.

Thirty years ago this summer, Senator Gibson saw this city and these great fields of grain where no eye but his could behold aught but naked prairie. He was called a dreamer. So he was, but he has lived to behold the realization of his dreams. The visions which then excited only ridicule have become actualities. Ridicule has given way to respect. The sunset days of Paris Gibson are bright. He dwells in an atmosphere of content, amid scenes of his own creation. The city which he saw, thirty years ago, in prophetic vision, has become a real city, inhabitated by people who hold toward its founder feelings of unbounded affection.

It was the shrewd, observant eye of the Yankee which was able to picture upon the bank of the Missouri the splendid city which has grown so true to the plan which the brain behind the Yankee eye evolved three decades back. That same penetrating view was able to discern the wonderful possibilities which lay dormant in the wonderful series of cascades over which the vast current of the river pours for twelve miles. It was the Yankee persistence and power which enlisted capital in the development of these natural advantages. For Paris Gibson is a Yankee from the state of Maine—just as far east as they make Yankees.

As a young man, Mr. Gibson had come west. He had constructed the first flour mill at what is now Minneapolis. He had prospered until a nation-wide panic swept his little fortune away. So toward the sunset he journeyed again and upon this journey he beheld for the first time the falls of the Missouri. He had just left the Falls of St. Anthony on the Mississippi and the Montana cascades appealed to him as being possessed of great possibilities. He set himself the task of their development and with this self-assigned duty there came the building of a great city upon the plain which overlooks the broad sweep of the river, just before it takes the plunge over the falls.

Of the trials through which Mr. Gibson passed and of the discouragements which he overcame before he could report progress, it is not necessary to say anything here. They were great and they would have put any ordinary man out of the running. But Senator Gibson was never an ordinary man. Always he was in the exceptional rating. And he had in mind the ideal which he had formed for the development of the advantages at the big falls. He never lost sight of this.

His persistence and courage triumphed—this is enough for the present story. He won out. There is a city where there was only a wilderness; there are fine farms where there was an arid waste; there are elms and maples where there was only greasewood; there are immense industrial plants along the waterfalls and from these same cascades there goes, over hundreds of miles of wire, the force which gives life to the state's greatest industry and keeps moving the wheels of vast enterprises. Viewing the situation now and considering how comparatively brief has been the time which has elapsed since Mr. Gibson first saw the falls, it seems incredible that a transformation so wonderful could have been made in this short span.

Of the falls of the Missouri, but one cascade remains unharnessed. There are dams and busy industrial plants at Black Eagle falls and at Rainbow falls. The Great falls alone, twelve miles below the city, tumble unhindered over the rocks which they have worn for ages with their ceaseless flow. But this is the last season which these wonderful falls will have of freedom. Already a cofferdam is reaching out from one bank above them and another is soon to extend from the other side, preparatory to the construction of a great power dam here. Another year will find this, the last and greatest of the falls, working for Montana.

It was my pleasure and good fortune, one day last week, to spend an hour with Senator Gibson at Great Falls. More than twelve years ago, when engaged in the preparation of some work connected with the movement to protect the public lands of Montana from the landgrabbers, I had talked with Mr. Gibson under almost the same conditions which governed the pleasant interview last week. I had met him prior to that time. I had seen him in the capital, Helena, I mean, and I had listened to his memorial commencement address at the state university, when he uttered words which rang throughout the state and which were instrumental in starting the aggressive campaign against the wholesale appropriation of lands in violation of the nation's laws.

I thought I understood him pretty well. Always, I had admired him. But that visit which I had with Senator Gibson in Great Falls gave me a new insight into the man's character and heightened my admiration and respect for him. More than ever I became convinced of the sincerity of the man, of his unselfishness and of the utter impersonality of his crusade for the protection of the public domain. As I drove with him across the prairie, out to his farm, I became imbued with some of his confidence in the success of the cultivation of the lands of northern Montana; I grew to share with positiveness his belief that these lands would be wrested from the range and would eventually become productive.

Only at intervals during the time that had intervened, had I met Senator Gibson, and then only casually. The acquaintance which was renewed last week, rather unexpectedly, was always pleasant as far as I was concerned. To Senator Gibson, of course, it was but a passing incident. It impressed me strongly. I have never forgotten the details of that long-ago visit and now I have the added memory of this later glimpse of the man who made Great Falls and who, more than any other man, is responsible for the present wonderful agricultural development of the lands of northern and eastern Montana.

When I met Senator Gibson last week, he had been home but a few hours from a long eastern trip. His eye flashed and his cheek glowed as he received the cordial greetings of his townspeople and as he looked about over the familiar scenes and breathed the air of his beloved valley. Hardly a man passed who had not a word of welcome and a kindly greeting. Senator Gibson belongs to Great Falls and its people are proud of the possession. It must be a pleasant experience to receive such uniformly pleasant words and to look into faces which are all smiles. As I watched the Great Falls people welcome their best friend, I envied him. I wished I had some occupation other than the newspaper business, for I knew that, in this calling, such an experience as that could never be mine.

With frequent interruptions of this sort, Senator Gibson talked to me—talked of the great wealth which lies in the undeveloped lands of Montana, wealth which is just becoming realized and which is to make Montana known as the great granary of the world; talked of wheat yields, of oat crops and of flax production; talked of acreage and bushels, of the varieties and the quality of grain; talked of the quality of men, too, and of the citizenry which is transforming Montana into a farm state.

This is an obsession with Senator Gibson. He knows dry-land farming by rote; he is wise in the lore of irrigation; he knows the quality of soils; he knows land law. What a promoter he would make! Were his talents to be devoted to the advancement of some special interest, write it down that the cause which he espoused would prosper; his magnetism would carry it through to success. But those talents have been given away for a lifetime—literally given away. They have been employed in the development of an idea and for the purpose of building a state. They have been given freely. Montana owes a great debt of gratitude to this man—northern Montana, specially, is under obligations to him.

He talked on and on, giving me figures upon figures, piling citation upon citation, quoting reference upon reference. Most of these I remember now, but as I write this they seem to have no place in the recollection which I have of the interesting talk to which I listened. It was the man and the principle which he discussed which formed the picture which I carried away from that pleasant afternoon's experience. Had I been the veriest skeptic, Senator Gibson would have convinced me. I could not have listened to his earnest exposition of Montana's agricultural possibilities and not have been made sure that the man was right. There was conviction in what he said and in the way he said it.

When my brief afternoon visit with Senator Gibson was over, I resumed my necessarily hurried tour of the valley about Great Falls. When this was finished, a couple of days later, I realized more fully how completely the Gibson idea is to be realized when the work already undertaken is completed.

It was a delightful trip in which I participated. There was no wind and the beautiful February afternoon afforded every condition necessary to thorough enjoyment. We saw the Black Eagle and Rainbow falls, where the Missouri is now doing so much to contribute to the success of Montana industrial enterprises. We saw the Giant spring. Then we swung out over the old Fort Benton trail.

All the while we had been upon historic ground, but the new things are so prominent there now, that it was not easy to realize the fact. The old tree has gone from below Black Eagle falls, the old tree in which was the eagles' nest from which Lewis and Clark obtained the name for the cascade. There are dams across the river at each of these falls now. There are great mechanical plants with their attendant activities. So it was not until we hit the trail for Benton that it seemed that we were really on one of the historic highways of the state.

But even this has changed. The fence of the farmer has forced wide detours in the old trail and the cabins of the homesteader dot the rolling prairie. There is plowed ground everywhere and there are preparations making for the breaking of new acres this spring. Along this old trail, there will this season wave the banners of the wheat fields; there will be new laurels won for Montana farms. Even in the dull grays and browns of February, the scene is pleasing.

From the Benton trail we turned down to the river again to visit the Great falls. We didn't know the way nor did our driver. If we hadn't been just as persistent and determined as were Lewis and Clark, we would never have seen the Great falls on that trip. If the doughty old explorers had any more trouble than we did in finding the falls, they are entitled to more credit than is usually given them. But we eventually got upon the right road, after receiving friendly assistance from women at more than one homestead cabin—the men were all afield. Almost before we knew it, our automobile turned into the box canyon, making its way along the fine road that has been dug from the rock wall. Down to the river bottom we dropped and there we were, facing the great cataract. It is an impressive sight. Not long will it be possible to behold it under such circumstances, for the preparations are already making for the construction of a mammoth concrete dam which will harness to labor the last of the falls of the Missouri.

At the falls we were met by Otto Schoenfeldt, himself a Montana landmark. He showed us about, Elrod took some photographs, we rested a bit and then struck out again for the Benton trail. Next spring, it will not be possible to obtain such a photograph of the falls as Elrod obtained that afternoon. Another year will find the falls robbed of their freedom, harnessed to work for man.

Then will the Gibson dream of the utilization of the falls of the Missouri be fulfilled. The whole line of cascades will in a year be at work. It knocks the romance out of the falls to some extent, but it makes the contrast all the more interesting. It is just the working-out of the scheme of destiny which Paris Gibson foresaw and it is coming just as he saw it.

Back we rode over the Benton trail. The auto chugged steadily as we sped down the long, easy grade. Lower sank the sun until it rested upon the crest of the Rocky mountains, away to the west. The sky took on the tints of evening and, ahead of us, the electric lights began to shine in the dusk which enveloped the city. One by one, these lights gleamed out through the gray twilight, outlining the city—once a city of dreams, now a verity indeed.

Over that trail along which we traveled, years ago there had journeyed the pioneers of a great state. Down that slope had been transported, slowly and laboriously, the supplies of the new territory. Hopeful and confident over that trail had marched the men who made Montana. And around us and before us was the realization of their hopes, the fulfillment of their expectations. The transformation has been wonderful; there are other changes ahead, even more remarkable.

There, in the city toward which we were speeding, was the white-haired man to whom is due more of the credit for these changes than to any other. Having seen what we had and understanding what had been before, it was easy for me to accept the assertion which he had made to me the afternoon before—"Montana will one day be the greatest agricultural state in the Union."

March 2, 1912.

FIGHTING FOR LOGS

AMONG the "first things" of Montana's history which I mentioned last week as credited to Hell Gate canyon, the lumber industry had place. It was in the splendid stand of forest which originally covered the canyon that the first extensive commercial lumbering in Montana was done. Back in the 40's Father Ravalli had built a crude sawmill in the Bitter Root at St. Mary's mission; there had been another at St. Ignatius; in the placer camps or near there, there had been lumbering on a limited scale to supply the local needs, but the first operations on a general commercial scale were in the forest of Hell Gate canyon. It was a splendid forest—that which the pioneers found all the way down this mountain pass. Its existence was, in a great measure, responsible for the location of the city of Missoula; the first building here was the old mill and it was built as close to the timber supply as it was possible to get water power readily applied. When the completion of the railway afforded a means for transportation which made the marketing of lumber practicable and the demand for the local product had become greater by reason of the rapid development which followed upon the heels of the railway building era, the men with experience in lumbering and with eyes to the main chance inaugurated the attack upon the forest which, in a few years, denuded the canyon of its timber but which, meanwhile, had founded the industry which has been such an important factor in the commercial development of western Montana.

There were many people from the lumber regions of Canada among the earlier settlers of western Montana; there were others from the woods of Wisconsin; there were men who had driven long teams of oxen in the timber of Maine. It was natural that the fine stand of pine and fir in Hell Gate canyon should appeal to these men; it was but a second step that small mills should appear, here and there, along the Hell Gate trail. Two years after the Northern Pacific trains began to run through, there were some important mill settings in Missoula county. There was so much good timber close at hand that there had not been much "cruising" up the Blackfoot; it was known in a general way that there was a wonderful body of timber back from the Hell Gate but it had not become necessary to draw upon this immense supply. There had been, as was evidenced a few years later, some quiet scouting in through the backwoods, but at this time the activity was confined to the canyon and its immediate adjacent gulches.

The Hammond people, who later organized the Big Blackfoot company, were operating several small mills in the canyon when the Northern Pacific came through. They had one mill on the flat between the present town of Bonner and the mouth of the Big Blackfoot. They had another setting at Bonita. George Fenwick was in charge of the Bonner mill; he afterward became superintendent of the great plant of the Big Blackfoot company and is now in the management of the Hammond redwood mills in California. Robert Coombs was boss at the Bonita mill; he is remembered by all the older residents of western Montana—a graduate of the woods of New Brunswick, big husky and blustering. Goodhearted he was, however, and loyal to his friends.

The lumbering methods in those days were crude in comparison with those of the mills of today. The timber was big and handy; there were no inspectors to check up stumpage; the cost of the raw material was not so great that it was necessary to employ rigid economy; it was cut and slash. It was a splendid stand of timber around Bonita. You can see some of the old trees standing yet; they were not easy to get, perhaps, or somebody was in a hurry and passed them up. There are some big stumps there, too, which show where there were trees which the early-day lumbermen did get. When the Hammond mill was located at the Bonita setting it was in the midst of some of the finest timber seen in Montana. There was great logging then.

Gradually the timber close at hand was worked off. It became necessary to extend the log haul to keep the mill supplied. It would seem like a short haul now, but when the logs had been rolled right on the mill skidway from the place where they had been felled, it seemed a long way to go. But the timber was about gone on the Bonita flat and Kenneth Ross, in the fall of 1885, was sent up Cramer gulch to construct a logging camp. The camp was built and made ready for occupancy. It was intended to use it the next year. The haul to the Bonita mill was about two and a half miles from the camp.

"Bill" Thompson—afterward mayor of Butte—was in the lumber business in Silver Bow county. He wanted some timber and he, too, had his eye on Cramer gulch. On October 6, 1886, a gang of fifty French-Canadians under the management of a man named LaLong and in the employ of Thompson, invaded Cramer gulch and proceeded to make free with the timber there. Their double-bitted axes slashed rapidly and they lost no time in getting them into action. It was good slashing and they made the most of it. As fast as they could they placed the Thompson brand upon the logs which they felled and the invasion of the gulch was accomplishing results that bade fair to spoil the timber reserve of the Hammond mill.

Cramer gulch runs into Hell Gate canyon right at Bonita. Cramer creek swings around Beavertail hill just as it approaches the canyon. It is a pretty drive out of Bonita and along the creek. There is second-growth pine now all along the slopes which were the scene of the timber war which was inaugurated by the invasion of Thompson's men and the aspect is altogether peaceful. There are farms on some of the land which was logged in those days. There is nothing in the scene to suggest the lively skirmishing which inaugurated the lumber operations in the gulch, which is known in local history as the Cramer gulch war.

But it was lively enough for awhile and there are some men in Missoula and its neighborhood who remember the stirring times when a man had to keep his eye peeled and his axe sharp; when the foremen wore sixshooters at their hips and when a word was all that was necessary to start a fight. The fight started, as I have said, with the arrival of Thompson's French-Canadians. It was a bloodless war but there was some fighting. There were reputations made and lost in Cramer gulch.

The Hammond people were just getting ready to log the gulch when the Thompson crowd arrived. A road had been graded for the log haul and three men were building a bridge over a long slough, to connect the camp with the mill, when the invaders appeared. One of these men was James D. Corbett, ex-alderman in Missoula now. He was fresh from Wisconsin that year and his first impression of Montana was that all the timber it contained was growing in Cramer gulch and, coupled with that impression, was the conviction that it must be unusually good timber, as everybody seemed to be fighting for it.

"I was working with a man named Clark on the bridge that day," said Mr. Corbett, when I asked him, the other day, for his recollections of the Cramer gulch war. "Our foreman was Bill Hurley and we were planking the bridge when the Thompson crowd came along and went up the gulch. They went up about as far as the camp that had been built and they began slashing right away. They were good timbermen, all right, and they got down to business without any delay. It wasn't long before Bob Coombs heard of it and he came up from the mill with a gang to drive out the Thompson crowd. He came along over the bridge where we were working. Pretty soon he went back. And the Thompson crowd stayed. But there were some things which happened between."

After Coombs and his men had gone up the gulch, the three men at the bridge concluded that there would be something doing worth seeing. So they followed up the gulch to see what happened. The Thompson crowd didn't take kindly to the invitation which Coombs gave them to get out of the gulch; perhaps it was not courteous enough, but whatever the cause, they didn't go. On the contrary they showed fight. There were several hand-to-hand fights over the possession of the logs which the Thompson men were trying to load. The Frenchmen lost out in some of these fights but they were raillied by their logging foreman—"Miles, they called him," said Corbett, "but I don't remember his other name"—and they just shoved back Coombs and his men.

Coombs retreated. He was pretty angry and was talking with a good deal of emphasis. When he got to where Corbett and Clark had been watching the engagement, he asked them why they didn't go in and help. "I told him," said Corbett, "that it seemed to be about man for man as they lined up then and a man that wanted anything better than that was a poor fighter."

That didn't tend to soothe Coombs any and he jumped down with his gun in his hand and for the first time in his life the youngster from Wisconsin looked down the barrel of a Colt's revolver. Clark grabbed up a peevy and rushed up. "If you shoot, I'll stick this peevy through you," said he. Coombs then put up his gun and the Hammond forces retired to headquarters at Bonita. Hurley, Corbett and Clark went back to their work on the bridge.

Over in the Rock Creek timber there was a lumberman at work, a fighting lumberjack named Bill Harris. He had been having trouble with Thompson and he was ordered to take charge of the Hammond forces in Cramer gulch. When he went over to Bonita in the morning he found his gang ready and he also found orders from Bonner to fire Corbett and Clark; these orders said they were tough men and added, "We don't want that kind of men."

Bill Harris went up the gulch. He stopped at the bridge and asked if Corbett and Clark were there. They responded. "Take your axes and come along with me," said he. Then he asked them what had been the trouble with them the day before. They told him they were new men from the east and were not used to being talked to as Coombs had talked to them; they hadn't any fight with anybody and didn't propose to take up any fight that was not their own. They were willing to fight when there was anything that was up to them; but they were not going to be poked around with a gun.

"I'll not fire them," was the word that Bill Harris sent back to headquarters. "They are the kind I want." He then and there attached Corbett and Clark as his bodyguard and all they had to do that winter was to follow him through the timber, carrying their axes and backing him up in his encounters with the enemy. They followed him up the gulch that morning and they worked with him all winter.

When Coombs had gone up on his first expedition to chase the Thompson gang out of the gulch, the Thompson foreman had offered to fight him or any man in his crowd to decide the ownership of the timber in the gulch. When Bill Harris went up to take up the fight, he asked if that offer held good. He said he would fight any one in the Thompson crowd, the winner to have the right to the timber. Then he said he would fight any two of them; later he declared he would fight three of them if there were three who would face him. But his challenge scared them and there was no acceptance of its terms.

Harris had a reputation which helped him. He was known as a fighter and he had worsted the Thompson fellows in the fight over the Rock creek timber, so they didn't feel like tackling him. It would be interesting to know what Bill Harris would have done, had his challenge been accepted. He was a good bluffer and he would have made it stick some way.

The war developed into a bushwacking contest after that. It was a case of get all the logs possible and get them fast. As soon as a tree was felled, it was branded either with the Hammond or the Thompson brand and, theoretically became the property of the outfit which had branded it. But sometimes the theory didn't work. Bill Harris and his two companions, Corbett and Clark, would come upon a gang of the Thompson crowd, loading logs. The Frenchmen would put their peeveys on it to roll it up the skids. Harris would knock off the peeveys. The opposition foreman would replace the peeveys and tell his men to "roll her up." Clark was a combative chap and he would say to Harris, "Tear his head off."

Perhaps there would be some shoving; maybe there would be a blow or two struck. All sorts of tricks were played. Chains were loosened and loads dumped. It became a contest of petty annoyances. "In the mixup of some of these fights," says Corbett, "I have seen excited men try to cut log chains with their axes. They would act like crazy men."

All through that period Bob Coombs and Bill O'Connell of the Bonita force would make trips up the gulch, each wearing a big gun on his hip. It used to make the men laugh. As far as known these guns were never drawn except on that first day when Coombs sought to make Corbett fight. The real fighting was done by Harris. He had a good equipment and he was getting two logs to Thompson's one. The Hammond logs were not cut up; the trees were merely trimmed where they fell and loaded on trucks to be taken down to the yard at the mouth of the gulch, where they were cut into saw lengths.

But the conditions were becoming critical. The men were getting nervous under the strain; they didn't want to fight over something which seemed to them little worth a battle, but they had esprit du corps sufficient to make them loyal to the interests with which their employment had allied them and there was likelihood that the mixups which were becoming more and more frequent would precipitate something serious. At headquarters, there were, fortunately, wiser heads and a compromise was reached by which each outfit was to get out what logs it could and to be undisturbed.

"We let them use all our roads, and we used theirs," says Corbett, "and that is the way we logged Cramer gulch. Our plank bridge was not included in the agreement, however, and no Thompson team was allowed to drive over that. They had to build a road away around that slough. That made it harder for them."

The Hammond forces had also the advantage of better teams. The horses were all big and active, while the Thompson teams were all inferior. And the Hammond men always felt that they were just a little, at least, the better men with axe and peevy. They logged fast, anyway, and there were few gulches in Montana which were stripped of their timber faster than was Cramer gulch that winter.

"There were many funny things about that winter's logging," said Mr. Corbett the other day as he reviewed the experience. "It was my first Montana job and it was all so new that I remembered about all of it. Coombs and O'Connell wore guns on their hips all winter, even after the truce was declared, and Bob never did forgive me for refusing to mix in a fight that was nothing to me. Though we were logging under agreement there were plenty of little annoyances all through the season. If there was a chance to put something in the other fellow's way, we didn't overlook it, but there was no more fighting heat after the first scrap. Clark was really sorry, I think, when the chance for fighting was passed up. Bill Harris kept us two as a bodyguard all winter, even after the agreement was made. He was taking no chances after he had run the bluff about fighting three of their best men for the right to log the gulch. Sometimes we would have arguments, Bill Harris doing all the talking for our side, and then Clark would always say, 'Tear into him, Bill.' "

Now the timber is all cut in Cramer gulch and there is another growth of pine, half a generation old, on the slopes where the logging war was fought. The edge of the forest has been forced back until it is a long haul from forest to mill. The primitive little sawmills that cut the canyon forest have yielded place to the great, modern plants, central in location, to which logs are hauled by steam over roads of steel. Millions of feet of lumber are turned out now where thousands were then. The lumber industry has become one of the mainstays of western Montana. There is no more slashing timber; the government reserves contain much of the forest now—carefully conserved, and the rest is held in private ownership. The logs cost more than they did in those days, though the logging methods are more scientific and more economical; but there is a stumpage price now or else the standing timber has been bought at something beside the bargain-sale figures of those days. Section lines are more rigid now than they were years ago; there are instances where they stretched a good deal when the loggers got to work. Things have changed in every department of the lumber business. It is a far cry back to the Cramer gulch war, but that engagement was one of the "first things" to be credited to Hell Gate canyon.

February 3, 1912.

HOW THE GRANITE MOUNTAIN WAS FOUND

UP GRANITE MOUNTAIN from Philipsburg leads one of the most interesting of Montana's old trails. It is a quiet-enough trail now. One may travel up and down from Philipsburg to the town of Granite at the mountain's top and back again and not meet a soul. But time was when this was a busy highway. It was teeming with life its entire length. Great teams strained up the long grade, laden with supplies for the thousands of people whose home was in the picturesque town, whose buildings found resting places between the great boulders of granite or else upon shelves which were dug out of the mountain side—people whose living depended upon the great silver mines of the mountain, the most wonderful producers of the white metal ever known. Passenger conveyances moved more rapidly up and down the wonderful old mountain, moved over what was probably the finest mountain road in the whole west—a veritable boulevard for smoothness and constructed upon a grade which was as easy as possible when the altitudes of its terminals are considered.

It was an experience never to be forgotten, to travel the old Granite-Mountain road in those days. It was thoroughly busy, every foot of it, and it was busy for nearly every one of the twenty-four hours which made up the day; sometimes the folks wished for more hours; it seemed impossible to crowd into the allotted number the amount of business which had to be done. Along the trail ran the cable line, whose suspended cars transported the silver ore from the wonderful mines on the mountain to the mills at the base of the great, old hill. Ceaseless was the movement of the endless line of cars and down below the great stamps beat incessantly upon the stream of ore which poured beneath them, hammering out the wealth which the rock contained. It was the greatest silver camp on earth.

Maybe there have been livelier towns somewhere, than were these two—Philipsburg and Granite—at the ends of the Granite mountain trail in the days when silver was a monetary metal. Maybe there have, but if there have been, their names and locations are not a matter of record. It would be a difficult matter to convince anybody who saw these camps in those days that there could be any town livelier. There was no night in either town. The day was 24 hours long. Every hour was busy and the lights made the midnight season as bright as midday. But there was little disorder; the folks were all too busy.

Of necessity, a trail which connected two such towns as these would, itself, be busy. And the road up the mountain fulfilled the law of probability to a nicety. It was a mighty industrious thoroughfare. The demonetization of silver sapped the life blood of the great industry which made these towns what they were. Almost within the span of a single day, these camps were transformed from hives of industry into deserted villages. It was one of the interesting experiences of my life that I was present during the exodus of the miners from Granite mountain; it was a memorable event. There were not vehicles enough to transport those who wished to ride down the mountain and many of them walked; trunks were piled high upon great hayracks and shipped down to the railway station; there were tears in a good many eyes, for Granite's people loved their town. But it is not my purpose to describe further or to discuss at all the dropping of the curtain upon the activities of Granite mountain. This is to be a story of the man who made Granite mountain famous, and who, incidentally, made a whole bunch of millionaires.

When the history of Montana is written, there should be a long chapter given to the story of Charles D. McLure. He took many millions out of Montana ground. A large portion of this wealth went to make the famous St. Louis group of millionaires. Mr. McLure retained some of it. A vast slice of it went back into the development of the state's mining industry and there are many mills among the Montana Rockies which are monuments to the courage of this remarkable man, many hoists which are testimonials to his daring. When he was confident that there was ore to be found, he never hesitated a minute to risk his all to find it. In the face of discouragement, he became the bolder and more determined. The harder he had to fight, the better he fought. And it stands today as his record that he was almost invariably right.

He was right because he did not form his opinion offhand. When he made inquiry it was searching. He investigated thoroughly; he approached his problem from all angles. When he had completed his study, he knew what he was about and he either rejected the proposition or adopted it. When he had adopted and approved a property, he knew no rest until he had demonstrated by development the correctness of his theory regarding it. Obstacles which would have dismayed an ordinary man, he brushed aside as if they were nothing. He had his goal set and he worked straight toward it. He did not drive blindly at it, but he worked intelligently and effectively; he planned his campaign and he followed his plan through thick and thin.

Charles D. McLure was not born to the mining business, but he was born to the frontier, and of a race of frontiersmen. It was in Carrolton, Mo., that he first saw the light. The year of his birth was 1844. For two generations his forbears had been in the vanguard of the westward advance; their names are prominent in the records of more than one state and always they figure with distinction. They were pioneers of pioneers, inured to hardship, trained to advance, drilled never to retreat. Born of this fighting blood and in an era of knight-errantry, it is not to be wondered at that the year 1860 found a sixteen-year-old boy working with freighting outfit through Nebraska to Denver, and that the name of that boy was McLure.

By inheritance fearless, by instinct adventurous, by training a dead shot, and by inclination a fighter—young McLure, by these traits and by his sterling honesty, soon won the complete confidence of his employers and, while yet but a lad in his teens, he was assigned to many confidential and perilous missions. One of these was the driving of a herd of cattle from Denver to Montana, the route being over trails dimly blazed and through the Sioux-infested valley of the Platte. Swimming difficult streams, fighting at times against great odds, inspiring his men always with his own indomitable spirit—the youngster accomplished the remarkable feat of arriving at his destination without the loss of a man or an animal.

Five years of this experience found McLure with an accumulation sufficient to enable him to have a freighting outfit of his own. In 1865 he was in the transportation business between Salt Lake and the new camps of Montana. He was successful, but he was not satisfied. Freighting did not seem to him to be the right way to make money. The lure of the placers seized upon him and he joined in the quest for gold. Selling his freighting outfit, his first mining venture was in old Confederate gulch; this was followed by digressions into fields of lesser renown and attended by varying success. His rich streaks were not more infrequent than those of the average placer miner, but the pursuit impressed him as too uncertain and he turned his attention to quartz mining. He associated himself with two uncles, the Parkinsons, and the later 60's found the partners established in the Unionville district, above Helena, where McLure located one particularly valuable lode, an extension of the Whitlach Union.

But it was haphazard work and unsatisfactory to McLure. He was soon convinced that success in quartz mining depended upon a thorough knowledge of geology and metallurgy and, having reached this conclusion, he proceeded with characteristic energy to equip himself for the pursuit which was to become his life work, and in which he was destined to achieve conspicuous success. He went back to Missouri and studied, studied with all the energy of which he was capable and with such effect that he was able, when he returned to Montana, to take charge of the old Centennial mill in Butte.

The year 1877 found McLure in Philipsburg, already a mining town of fame, where he assumed direction of the famous old Hope mill. Here in this wonderful old property, McLure found the field for which he was born; here was the place which he was predestined to occupy; here was the wealth—yet hidden—which he was fore-ordained to uncover and give to the world. For this, his years of preparation had fitted him, all unconsciously to himself, but when the emergency rose he was able to meet it and when the opportunity came he grasped it with the grip of a winner. For this very situation he had learned how to meet sudden contingencies; for this, he had learned to handle men; for this, he had gained experience in smoking out hidden foes; for this he had studied the flow of streams, the nature of rocks, the character of ores and the details of the extraction of metals. Life on the plains, on the trail, in the mountains and among the mines had fitted him admirably; he was prepared in the best school of all, the school of experience.

This is not a mining treatise or I might tell—if I could—of the changes he made in the Hope mill, which increased its efficiency and marked McLure as a remarkable metallurgist. The Hope mill is the oldest reduction plant in Montana. Its story is a tale in itself. For years and years its stamps have pounded, pounded, pounded—when all else was silent at the foot of Granite mountain; for years it has produced its wealth of metal when all other sources in the district failed; always the Hope has made good its name and has kept alive the confidence of the Philipsburg people, whom I regard as the pluckiest lot of folks in Montana. It is a remarkable mine, the Hope, and its mill is a wonderful institution. It has produced a vast amount of wealth in the long years of its almost uninterrupted operation and it has graduated some remarkable men—but none greater, none entitled to higher place in the esteem of Montana, than Charles D. McLure.

He took up the improvement of the Hope mill just as he took up everything else—with a determination to win. It was while he was winning with the Hope that his attention was directed to the Granite mine, then a mere prospect in the forbidding granite region overlooking the Flint creek valley. McLure had been looking over the country, but with characteristic conservatism, had said nothing. He had learned a lot. All of the mining in the district had been in the secondary formation; after a year of study, McLure prospected away from this into the older rock. That prospecting made the Granite Mountain mine.

Dr. Josiah M. Merrill was the assayer at the Hope. He soon acquired a respect for the new superintendent; it was he who first directed the attention of McLure to the prospect on the hill. Merrill was one of the owners of the Granite Mountain location. It was not a promising prospect. The outcrop was large, but there was nothing to indicate anything more than low-grade mineral. The country, itself, was forbidding. Rugged, precipitous, crowded with huge boulders, supporting no vegetation but its clothing of lodgepole pine—there was little to tempt the miner or to invite the prospector. There had been a short tunnel and a fifty-foot winze driven; this represented all the work that had been done on the property. None of the owners had much confidence in the prospect.

Illustrative of the estimation in which it was held, I was told, the other day, of an interesting circumstance connected with the early history of Granite Mountain mine. The fifty-foot winze referred to had been sunk by contract; the contractor was to receive a quarter interest in the property for his work. When he had finished, Holland, one of the locators, measured the winze and found it one foot short; applying for the stock, which was to be his payment, the contractor was told to finish the job. Rather than sink that other foot, he let the whole thing go by default. Thus lightly he threw over his shoulder a quarter interest in the greatest silver mine the world has ever known. It would be interesting to know just how he felt a few years later.

In his prospecting on the surface, McLure picked up a bit of float. He put it in his pocket and took it home for assay. The next day he asked for a bond on the property. This was in 1880. There were three owners—Merrill, Holland and Estell. The bond was given for $40,000; Holland and Estell would not take stock in payment; Merrill accepted stock merely because he feared the deal would not go through if he refused. It is said by those who are in a position to know, that the owners would have accepted much less than the figure agreed upon. But McLure was not a bickerer; he either accepted or rejected and the development of the great Granite Mountain was begun.

It was a vast undertaking. It must be remembered that the Northern Pacific had not yet pushed its way through Hell Gate canyon, at the foot of Flint creek. The location was remote and inaccessible. Capital was shy of quartz-mine investment. Dollars were not easily coaxed for mine development in Montana. But McLure got together enough to start the work. Miners began the attack upon the great ledge on the summit of the divide. It was hard mining; steadily the capital dwindled, but McLure was positive, and his confidence was unshaken, though the hoped-for results seemed as far away as when the work was started. But he knew that, somewhere ahead in that solid granite mass there was rich ore. He was determined to find it. And the miners drilled on and on.

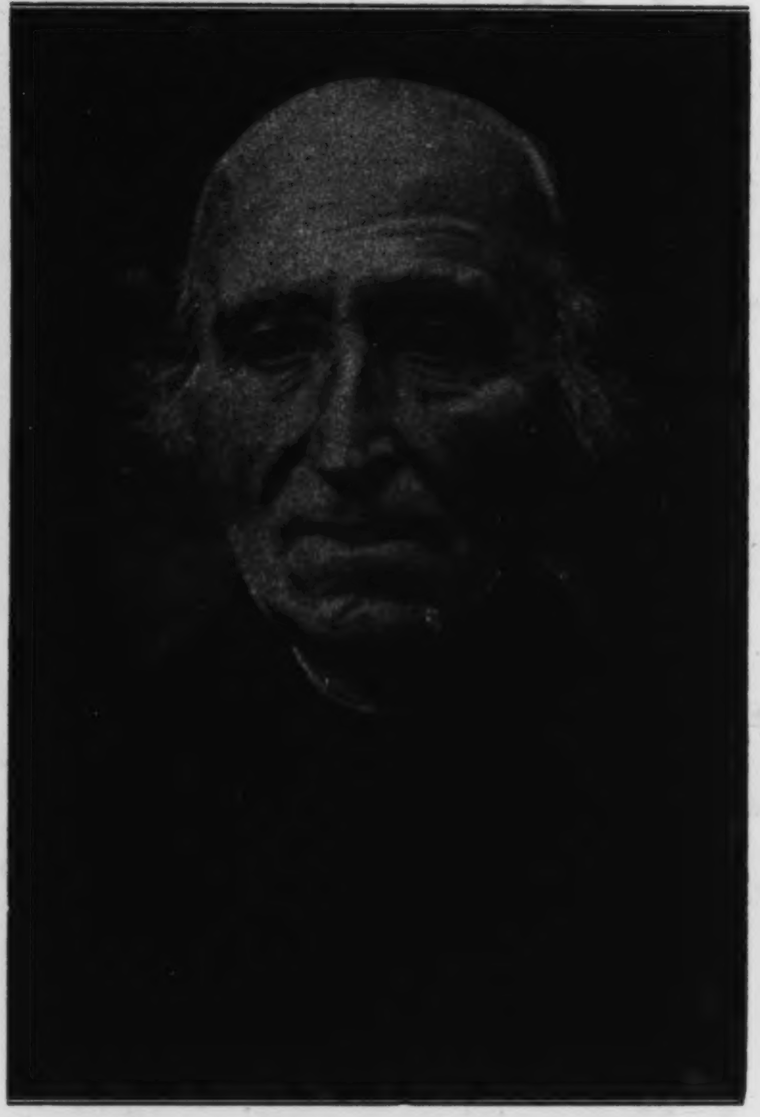
But even the infectious confidence of McLure had its limits as a persuasive influence, and there came a day when there was no more money available or in prospect. McLure counted up and found that he had just enough to pay the men for that shift. This did not mean with him that the work would be abandoned, but it looked dark, and it seemed certain that the development would be postponed. There was discouragement, but no dismay; the ore was there; he knew it; it was just a question of getting funds to reach it.

There had been no values discovered in the work that had been done. It was the last shift, but the miners worked doggedly on. Through the day there had been no change in the conditions underground. The last shot was tamped home, the fuse was lighted and the miners prepared to leave the work which they had pushed so persistently under the determined driving of the man at the head of the work. That last shot was fired. It threw bonanza ore upon the muckers' planks. The Granite Mountain was discovered and Charles D. McLure became in that moment one of the greatest mining men of his time.

From that evening in 1880 until now the great Granite Mountain fissure has steadily yielded its wealth of the white metal into the markets of the world. It has made millionaires of the backers of the plucky, persistent man who grimly and gamely fought against odds to uncover the bonanza which made Granite Mountain a household word. The mine developed under scientific management into a model of underground development; a shaft more than one thousand eight hundred feet deep is entered at the one thousand foot level by a tunnel three miles long. The great ore body has shown no sign of exhaustion; in its miles of levels the great mine yet holds vast bodies of workable ore. The low price of silver caused the cessation of operations at the mine; water fills its depths to the height of the drainage tunnel. Some day the market may warrant the resumption of work here.

But always the Granite Mountain and the marvelous wealth it produced will remain as a monument to the man who found it in the face of difficulties. He, through his keen insight, contributed to the wealth of Montana more than $25,000,000. His whole record is constructive; he has risked more than any other mining man in Montana, but it has been no haphazard risk; it has been the venture of the far-seeing man, of the man who knows. Montana owes much to Charles D. McLure, who first saw her soil as a freighter and who became one of her greatest men.

March 9, 1912.



Father Ravalli

HOW THE BLACK ROBES CAME

ONE OF the mural paintings which will decorate the new state capitol is to bear the title, "The Quest for Truth." Over in the interesting studio of Artist E. S. Paxson the other day, I watched the progress which his wonderfully clever hand is making with this great picture. The theme and the inspiration of the work which the strong brush of Paxson is evolving are found in the earnest and persistent endeavor of the Bitter Root Indians to reach St. Louis with a message to the Black Robes, asking them to come across the great mountains and to bring to these people the Message of the Cross. Some inkling these Indians had had of the religion of the white man and they wanted to know more of it; they desired the truth.

The Paxson picture shows a trail through the woods, along which are traveling the messengers from the Bitter Root on their way to the east, where they hoped to deliver to the Black Robes the petition of their people, asking for a priest to tell them the Story of the Living God. It is an impressive scene which Mr. Paxson is depicting. It seems to me he has caught the very spirit of that wonderful journey. There is the same expression upon each of the stern faces—an expression which tells the earnestness of their purpose and the sincerity of the longing which prompted the journey. As I watched the artist work, the whole story came back to me. It is a tale which has been told many times, but it is a story ever new and to me it is the most remarkable chapter in the history of Montana's earliest days.

Back in the seventeenth century, French missionaries had labored among the Indians along the St. Lawrence river. Some of their names have been preserved and one of these is the name of Father Ignace Jogues, whose work had been among the Canadian Iroquois. This great priest was successful among this people and his name was revered by them; he gave his life to his cause, but his example lingered and it was from his converts that the message of the Gospel first came to the Flathead Indians in their ancestral home in the Bitter Root.

So careful a student of history as Father Palladino has been able to find no direct purpose for the emigration, but it is an established fact that a band of these St. Lawrence Iroquois journeyed westward to the Rocky mountains earlier than 1820. The leader of this band was Ignace La Mousse, who is known in the history of the Flatheads as Big Ignace—in recognition of his remarkable physical prowess—or as Old Ignace—in tribute to his marked morality. These wandering Iroquois came, in the course of their journeying, to the Bitter Root valley, where they were hospitably received. The beauty of the valley and the gentleness of its people impressed Big Ignace and his companions so favorably that they made their place their journey's end. They married there and were adopted into the tribe.

It was through the recital of Big Ignace that the Flatheads first learned of the Black Robes and of the religion of the Cross. He taught his new people much of the Catholic religion, which the Iroquois had known for two centuries, and explained something of its rites and its doctrines. It is said that Ignace taught his new people the Lord's Prayer; we know that he taught them the sign of The Cross and others of the practices of the church. He found ready listeners among the gentle Flatheads, who learned from him the observance of Sunday and who, under his instruction, placed rude crosses to mark the burial places of their dead.

Naturally, the Flatheads wanted to know more of this wonderful religion of the white man; they readily agreed with the suggestion of Ignace that it would be good if they could induce the Black Robes to come and teach them. They learned from him that in a great city, far down the big water, there were men of the Black Robes and if they could reach these men, there would be teachers sent to the valley to instruct them. It was a bold undertaking—the distance was great and the trail was unknown, for the greater part of its length. The way led through the valleys of hostile tribes and there were unknown dangers all along the route.

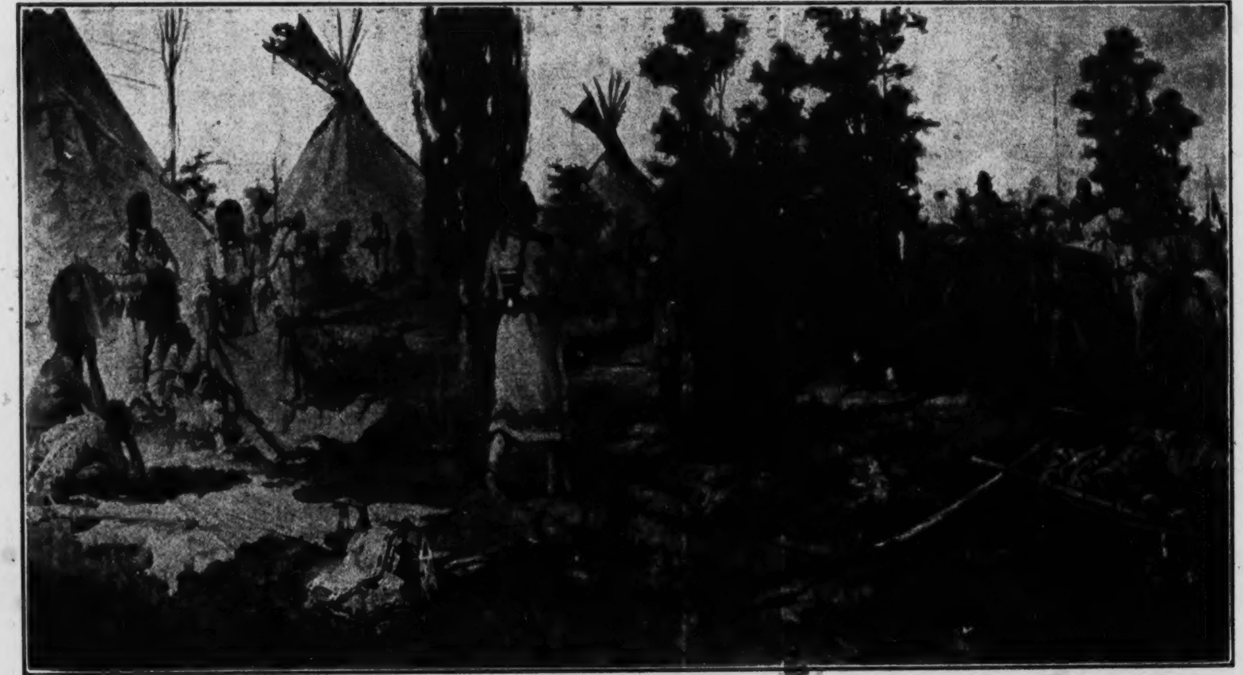
But the Flatheads were fearless and they were earnest in their desire to know the new religion. Volunteers were found for the mission and four Indians set out for St. Louis in 1831. That these brave seekers for the truth made the journey successfully we know, for the records at the cathedral of St. Louis show that two of them, who had been baptized as Narcisse and Paul, died while waiting in the great city and were buried there. The names of their companions are not known, nor is there any knowledge of what became of them. They did not reach their home again and were probably killed by hostiles on the back trail. They were successful in finding Explorer Clark, who had passed through their valley years before, but there was nobody who could translate their dialect and they were unable to make known their desires and the wish of the people who had sent them. It was years afterward that the Jesuits became acquainted with the mission of the brave men.

In 1835, Insula, known as Little Chief, led a party of Flatheads through hostile lands, fighting all the way, to Green river in Wyoming, where it had been rumored missionaries might be found. This delegation met the Whitman party but was dissappointed, the records say, in not finding the Black Robes and would not treat with the Protestant missionaries. Insula led his warriors back to the Bitter Root.

Late in the summer of 1835, after the return of Insula, Big Ignace himself offered to take to the Black Robes the message of the Flatheads. He started with the intention of going back to his old home in Canada, but learning of the easier way to St. Louis, he went there with his boys. He had a journey fraught with privation and danger, but he and the lads escaped them all and, after much suffering, reached St. Louis late in the fall. His sons were baptized and Ignace presented to the bishop the plea of the Flatheads. Receiving assurance that a priest would be sent as soon as possible, Ignace turned his face westward and happily started for the home valley. He and the boys reached the mountains safely.

There was joy among the Flatheads which was succeeded by disappointment when two years passed and no Black Robes came. Impatient, Ignace offered again to make the journey to St. Louis. He was joined by three Flatheads and one Nez Perce. They fell in, on the east side, with a party of whites and with them traveled safely until they reached the South Platte in the Sioux country, where they were attacked. The Sioux made prisoners of the whites, that they might not interfere in the fight, and offered Ignace the privilege of a non-combatant, but the brave Iroquois chose to cast his lot with his friends and lined up with them for the fierce combat which ensued. There were three hundred of the Sioux, but the five reds from the Bitter Root fought desperately and before they were all killed, there had been fifteen Sioux sent across the great divide. Thus perished Ignace, the instrument of Providence who delivered to the Flatheads their first knowledge of the Cross. And thus failed the fourth expedition.

The news of the death of their braves finally reached the Bitter Root Indians at their home. There was much mourning and the great council was assembled. The Flatheads were determined and undismayed; in council they resolved to dispatch other messengers. Two younger Iroquois volunteered—they only could make themselves understood among the whites. These were Left-Handed Peter and Young Ignace. They left the Bitter Root in the summer of 1839 and, associating themselves with some Hudson Bay men, went down the river in canoes and were suc-



Photograph by McKay. Arrival of Father Ravalli at St. Mary's Painting by Paxson.

cessful in presenting the case of the Flatheads to the bishop once more.

Peter and Igance made a strong impression at the Jesuit college; they could speak French and the priests hung upon their words, intensely interested. The Indians told the long story of the quest for the truth which the Flatheads had so bravely and patiently prosecuted; they told of the other expeditions and of the disappointment of the Indians that no priest had come to them. They won their cause. The promise was given that a priest would be sent in the spring. It was arranged that Peter should return at once to his people with the good news, while Ignace should wait to guide the priest who would be sent in the spring.

The priest who volunteered for the work among the Flatheads was Peter De Smet, whose name is now revered in Montana. It was first proposed to send two priests, but it was found that the funds were insufficient and the young Jesuit bravely set forth alone. April 5, 1840, Father De Smet and Ignace started for Montana's mountains. At almost that same date Left-Handed Peter arrived at the camp of the Flatheads on Eight Mile creek in the Bitter Root, with the news that a Black Robe was coming. He had made the journey from St. Louis in safety and his people received him with joy. Receiving his information, the Flatheads decided to send a party to meet the Black Robe, and ten picked warriors were detailed to go forward, while the tribe would follow and make camp for the reception of the man of God.

Father De Smet and Ignace traveled safely in company with a fur-trading party as far as Green river, where they found the ten Flathead warriors waiting for them. At once, the young priest bade farewell to his traveling companions and, joining his new friends, prepared for the journey to the shining mountains. The day was Sunday, July 5, when Father De Smet was greeted by the Flatheads. There was, of course, no traveling that day, but the priest held a service before a motley congregation of Indians, hunters and freighters. An altar was erected upon a knoll and was covered with boughs and flowers. Before this Father De Smet said mass.

The next morning the northward march was begun. Up the Green river valley into the lava region in Idaho, through narrow defiles and over the secondary divide to the headwaters of the Snake river, Young Ignace led the priest and there in the valley that is called Pierre Hole, Father De Smet was amazed to find the main body of the Flatheads, who had traveled 300 miles to meet him. Detached bands of Nez Perces, Kalispells and Pend d'Oreilles had joined the Flatheads with the result that there were more than 1,500 Indians in the great camp upon which the travelers came all unexpectedly.

Father De Smet was deeply stirred by his reception. His entrance into the camp was a triumphal ovation. Men, women and children were demonstrative in their welcome. It was the hour for which the tribe had waited for many years; it was the man whom they had yearned for nearly a generation, the Black Robe. All sought to touch his hand he was led in triumph to the tepee of the chief, whose formal welcome was stately and royal in his dignity. The chief, Big Face, offered to resign his temporal authority to the Black Robe whose coming had been so earnestly desired and whose arrival was so sincerely welcome.

Embarrassed, the young priest explained the purpose of his mission—he had come to teach, not to rule. There was a brief conference, at which hours were appointed for services, when the Indians should assemble for prayers and instruction. One of the chiefs, who had heard from Big Ignace the story of the manner of worship, presented the priest with a little bell, with which to summon to prayer, and was overjoyed when the gift was accepted.

That evening the bell tinkled its call and before the lodge of the priest there gathered nearly two thousand Indians to recite prayers in common. The prayer concluded, the Indians—to the complete surprise of the priest—burst forth in a hymn of praise of their own composition. Triumphant it rang, the song of praise of these thankful children of nature, and the priest was completely captivated.

So came the Gospel to the Flatheads. Thus did they receive the Black Robe who had bravely come forth to deliver to them the Marvelous Message. Long had these simple children of the wilderness waited for the day; devoutly had they hoped for the new light in which they had groped so patiently and so hopefully. For this day they had faced death and danger, unflinchingly; for this they had risked the lives of their bravest young men; for this their good and brave friend, Big Ignace, had sacrificed his life. It was the supreme hour and they were filled with happiness.

Camp was soon moved up to what we now call Henry's lake. After a sojourn of a few days at the lake, the Indians moved again and their next stop was on the Beaverhead river, where—near the mouth of the Big Hole basin—was held the first formal religious service in Montana. There was another camp in the Big Hole and then a change over the mountains to a point near the Three Forks of the Missouri. All this time Father DeSmet carried on his work of instruction; they were busy, happy days for him.

Until August 27, when he parted with the main body of the tribe in the Gallatin valley, Father DeSmet remained constantly with the Flatheads. Bidding them goodbye, he started back to St. Louis through the Yellowstone country, to prepare for his return to live permanently with the Indians. Through the hostile buffalo country he journeyed, receiving homage from the Blackfeet, and he reached St. Louis late in December. His report was received with enthusiasm and he kindled amongst all his associates a desire to join him in the work that was planned that winter.

In the spring of 1841, Father DeSmet started back to the mountains. With him were two zealous young priests, Father Mengarini and Father Point. Three lay brothers accompanied the priest, Joseph Specht, Charles Huet and William Claessens, all earnest for the work ahead. They had as guide a squawman named John Gray; their drivers were two Canadians and an Irishman. Their outfit consisted of saddle horses, pack animals and four carts and one wagon, drawn by oxen. These were the first wheeled vehicles to be brought to Montana.

The journey was without untoward incident and ten lodges of Flatheads were found at the rendezvous which had been agreed upon in the Wind river country. In the party which met the priests were friends of Father DeSmet. Gabriel Prudhomme, an adopted halfbreed who had been the priest's interpreter the year before; Charles and Francis, the sons of Big Ignace who had been baptized in St. Louis; Young Ignace, who had been the father's guide on the first trip; Simon, the oldest man in the tribe, whom Father DeSmet had baptized the year previous. These were the first to greet the party.

The Flatheads were on their annual hunting trip; from the main camp fresh horses were obtained and their provisions were replenished. It was decided that the Indians should finish their hunt and that they should meet the priests in their home valley at its conclusion. It was August 30 when Father DeSmet reached the main camp of the hunters and the reunion was joyous.

While the Indians hunted, the missionaries journeyed slowly, coming up the Beaverhead, over the low divide and into the Deer Lodge valley. The route lay down the Hell Gate canyon to where Missoula now stands and thence up the Bitter Root valley to a point near the present site of Stevensville. The journey's end was reached September 24.

Father DeSmet named the place St. Mary's and this was the name bestowed upon the mission which was formally established the following month, when the Flatheads had returned from their hunt. Here was the first white settlement in Montana; here was the first permanent human habitation builded in this great state. And the first settlers were men of God. Few commonwealths have had such an auspicious beginning.

On the first Sunday in October, 1841, St. Mary's mission was formally inaugurated. A large cross of logs had been prepared by the fathers and the lay brothers and this was raised in the center of the beautiful valley which was the ancestral home of the Indians whose persuasion had led the priests there. With the raising of the cross, the foundations were laid for the mission buildings. There was an exultant religious service, in which priests and people joined with equal fervor. Above, the snowclad peak of St. Mary's pointed heavenward; the blue sky was the dome of the cathedral in which this mass was sung and that mountain grand was the pinnacle of the spire. Never was there more inspiring setting for scene like this. It was the dawn of civilization in this region and the Cross was in the vanguard of the vast procession which was to follow in the peopling of this land.

It is easy to imagine the ecstacy which thrilled the souls of those fervent young priests. In all Montana there is no other spot which I like more to visit than the place where St. Mary's mission stands. Such a visit is an inspiration. The place is hallowed by wonderful memories. The simple mission has become hemmed in, now, by the busy workaday world, but it is yet there with its message of peace and righteousness, and the blue sky arches as gloriously above as it did upon that fair October day; the fields stretch away as beautiful as they were then; the wonderful river flows as blue and clear as then; the peak of St. Mary's points ever heavenward as faithfully as it did of yore. And, hallowing and sanctifying all, is the memory of the good men who established the mission, who first blazed the trail to Montana—and of the good men who came after, especially that good man Father Anthony Ravalli whose life closed amid these loved scenes and whose last resting place is marked by the simple shaft of white marble which rises back of the little chapel which he builded, in which he labored for the good of mankind and within whose walls he finally lay down and passed into his long sleep. It is hallowed ground.

March 16, 1912.

THE CASE OF JOE SARISH

IF EVER you go to Philipsburg, do not fail to meet Joe Sarish. By all means you should go to Philipsburg, for your acquaintance with Montana is not complete if you have not seen this remarkable town. Your visit will be interesting and instructive, whether you meet Joe Sarish or not, but it will be made memorable if you do meet him and hear him tell some of the stories which make up the chapters of a life-history which teems with thrilling events.

Joe Sarish is 83 years old now. Of the eighty-three years of his life, fifty-five have been spent in the west and forty of them in Granite county. He came west from his native home on the Atlantic coast in 1855 and ever since then he has been of the west a part.

Teamster and miner, pony-express rider and Indian fighter, he fought and worked to make clear and safe the way to the northwest. Few men have passed through a greater variety of experiences, few have survived greater danger, few have come unscathed through such grave perils.

And now, in the sunset days of his long and eventful life, Joe Sarish is the guest of Granite county. He does not regard it as a humiliation that he is a county charge. Rather, he considers he paid his taxes for all the years of his activity. "Sometimes it was only a road tax," he says, "but I never missed paying that. Always I paid my tax, whatever it was, and the county is now responsible for me."

Thus philosophically does Joe Sarish discuss the situation. Just as calmly does he talk about it as if he were a millionaire, talking about his investments. As long as he was able, he paid his share of the expense of maintaining the county. That was his provision against a rainy day. Now the rainy day has come, he does not hesitate to demand what he regards as his right.

In all Granite county, I believe, there is no man, woman or child who begrudges Joe Sarish the living which he claims and receives from the common fund. The old man comes and goes at will; he drops in, here and there, and chats with his friends; his round of visits is always pleasant; there is ever a kind word for him. His tobacco and his bit of whisky are provided by old-time friends; he is kept decently clothed; there is none of his material wants which is not satisfied; he lives as comfortably as if he had found the rich lead for which he prospected so many years: he is well off as if the pot of gold had been found at the end of the trail which he so bravely blazed that others might follow in safety and in comfort.

But Joe Sarish is about the only one who regards his situation in this easy light. It seems to me—and I believe the opinion is pretty generally shared—that the case of Joe Sarish is another of the instances which reflects seriously upon the fame of Montana; it is a blot upon the scutcheon of the state that there should be even one of her pioneers, living in a poorhouse, a county charge. Joe Sarish is not the only one and there are some of the others who rebel bitterly against the unkind fate which has placed them where they are. It is not creditable to this great state that any trailblazer should be dependent upon local charity for existence. Montana should have a pioneers' home.

But little recks Joe Sarish of the ethics of his case. He lives among friends; he moves amid the scenes which have been his familiar environment for almost half a century; he receives from his home community the support which he made sure of, years ago, when he was strong and vigorous and paid his tax for the support of those who were less fortunate than he. It is the most natural thing in the world that the generation which has come after his time should take care of him. His philosophy is wonderfully sound, it seems to me. He holds his head as high and he looks you as squarely in the eye as if he had a bank account. He is independent. There is none of the suffering and anguish which would come to a more sensitive soul, thus destitute as life's sun sets. It is fortunate that it is so—fortunate for Joe Sarish and fortunate for the state. He accepts as his just due the living which is doled out to him and the state is spared the bitter reproaches which would be heaped upon her head were there any rancor in the heart of Joe Sarish.

Joe Sarish is alert, despite his more than 80 years. His head is carried erect and his eye is bright. A white beard is about all there is in his makeup to suggest the years which he bears. A couple of years ago it became necessary to amputate Joe Sarish's leg just below the knee—some trouble with the bone was the cause. Twice since there have been further amputations and he has but a stump left. Each time Joe Sarish has refused to have any anesthetic and the surgeons have used merely local applications. The man who had faced all the dangers of the frontier and who had escaped the perils of trail and battle, that man was not frightened by the steel of the surgeon.

Joe Sarish was born in New Jersey in 1829. There were not many thrillers in New Jersey in those days. He lived the uneventful life of the eastern youth, on the sand flats of his native state, until he was 25 years old. That was in 1854. The California gold fever was at its height then and Joe Sarish was inoculated.

In March, 1854, Joe Sarish turned his back upon New Jersey and started for the gold mines of the Pacific coast. He was at fever heat; the lure of the mines had seized him and his inborn instinct had manifested itself; he knew—as every true prospector knows—that his treasure was waiting for him and he had but to travel to the sunset coast to obtain it.

"I goes horseback across the country to Saint Joe," says Joe Sarish when you ask him how it all happened. He takes it all as a matter of fact and he does not see why anybody should have special interest in what he did all those years ago. He is not eloquent—words do not come easily to him when he is trying to tell something. It is only when he talks unconsciously that he really tells what you want to know.

Once, Joe Sarish's friend, Frank Brown, got the old man to write the story of his life for the files of the pioneers' society. Joe's story, as he wrote it, is told in less than 500 words. It is brief. But Joe Sarish says it tells the whole story. Five fierce battles with Indians are described in five short lines. But that's the whole thing—so Joe Sarish says.

When he talks about it and doesn't stop to think that you are learning something from him—then you get some idea of what Joe Sarish has passed through. Then you are glad that Montana is taking some sort of care of this old man, even if it is but the care which she gives to the common pauper.

"I goes horseback across the country to Saint Joe," says the old man. From the Jersey coast to St. Joseph, even now, is a long jaunt. It is a ride halfway across the continent. To the average Atlantic-coast native, it is a journey to be long planned and to be undertaken with considerable trepidation. If it is such a trip now, what was it then? Now the journey is merely a matter of buying a railway ticket and getting aboard a train. In 1854, it was a journey of many days. Joe Sarish made the journey on horseback. He met many people and he had many adventures. But none of the latter were serious and all the people he met treated him kindly.

Jogging along, down the Ohio valley and across the great basin of the Mississippi, the young argonaut made his way to the Missouri city which was then the outfitting point for the far west. He says there was nothing in the trip to St. Joe that is worth talking about. He just rode it on horseback—that's all.

He just did it—that's all. Such is the story of nearly every one of the army of pioneers. To them there is nothing of glory in the deeds which they performed. The work was cut out for them and they did it. They never reckoned the obstacles and they never counted the dangers. The work was there and it had to be done. They had been placed there to do it. So they did it. And they can see no reason for making any fuss about that.

When Joe Sarish got to St. Joe, he wasted no time in getting busy. "I drove team outen there for Limston, Holiday & Company, to Salt Lake, arriving there in June, 1855."

Joe Sarish was in the real west. There was so much doing, right at hand, that he never had time to make the journey to the coast. He was thoroughly occupied with other things and he knew his pot of gold would wait. There would be time enough, later, to look for it. So for five years he drove team for the Limston outfit.

These were the years of the Mormon massacres. Joe Sarish's memories of the years he drove team out of Salt Lake dwell largely with these deplorable incidents. The persecution of the non-Mormons made a deep impression upon him. Of all the events of these years that one which is pleasantest in the recollection of the old pioneer, he describes as follows:

"In 1857 I had charge of a mule train for Limston & Holiday and went to Fort Laramie on the Platte for supplies. While we were at Laramie, Johnson's army came by on the road to Salt Lake to regulate the Mormons. This outfit went into camp near Fort Bridger, at a place they called Camp Scott. The following spring they went into Salt Lake and the Mormons quit their killing—or didn't do quite so much of it after that."

It was while he was trainmaster for the Limston outfit that Joe Sarish had his first important Indian fight. This was while he was on one of his eastward trips for supplies. At Sandy, east of Green river, his train was attacked by Crows. Joe Sarish held his train together and he and his men stood off the Indians in a day-long fight. Some of his animals were killed and there were injuries to some of his men. But the Indians were forced to retreat and Joe Sarish, having work to do, did it.

One other Indian fight he had in those years, which he remembers well. It was with the Bannacks and occurred at Point of Rocks. This threatened to be serious; but the Indians found they were against experienced plainsmen and after a sharp encounter, in which the reds showed their bravery and revealed the fact that they were well equipped, the freighters succeeded in getting the field clear and the Bannacks withdrew to the hills.

There was warning in this attack—warning that the Bannacks were ugly. Joe Sarish gave the warning and urged that the trail be protected for the emigrants. But, as was too frequently the case, the military disregarded the advice of the man who knew and took no action. Just a month later a large emigrant train was attacked by the Bannacks at the same place.

Nearly 200 were killed. Only 40 of the large party succeeded in fighting their way through the reds and in getting to Salt Lake with word of the disaster. All of the women and children were either killed by the Indians or else were victims of exposure and hardship.

Then, and not till then, the Johnson headquarters got busy. A detachment of troops was dispatched from Salt Lake on the trail of the hostiles. When the pursuit was ended the Bannack tribe was almost exterminated. The massacre at Point of Rocks was avenged and the troops were accorded much praise. But the same action might have been taken in time to prevent the massacre, had the advice of Sarish been heeded. There are scores of similar instances in the history of the settlement of the west. It was a long time before the military learned to trust the plainsmen and the mountaineers, who knew the west and knew its Indians.

So passed the five years until 1860. Ben Holiday had organized the famous pony express and was picking out his riders. The history of the pony express has been written so often that it is well known. In all the story of the west there is nothing more thrilling than the experiences of the men who rode this famous courier service. They were horsemen, riders, fighters, daredevils and, always, loyal to the core.

Holiday knew what he required and he was a good judge of men. It is not strange that one of the men he chose was Joe Sarish. For five years Joe Sarish had been in service; he knew the country; he was a horseman and he had proved that he was a fighter. Holiday called him and he very promptly accepted the call.

Thus it happened that the first dispatches which were taken west from Salt Lake were borne by Joe Sarish. He rode from Echo canyon, west to Bear river, a distance of 40 miles. If you know the Utah country, you know what a beautiful ride that must have been. But Joe Sarish doesn't remember whether it was a pleasant trip or not—he says it was hard riding. He wore out a good many horses and he wore himself pretty hard, but he pulled through. He rode as all the men rode in the pony express—rode to get there. There was no sparing man or horse in that dash. The relays were short; all that was in a horse was pumped out of him in the mad spurt and when the man had ridden his last relay, he was thoroughly spent.

Just gristle and nerve were those riders. Joe Sarish was one of the best of them, which means that his gristle was a bit harder and his nerve a bit stronger than the average of this picked lot of men. For three years he endured the grind. Back and forth over that racecourse he rode like the wind. Forty miles west and forty miles east and then back again. We think the man who rides a trained galloper over a smooth course is a wonderful rider. What must we say of the men who were the riders in that great race against time?

In 1863, summer, Joe Sarish left the road and turned northward to resume the quest for gold which he had undertaken nine years before. From Fort Bridger he came to Bannack and there he began his mining experience. He had been a long time reaching the land of pay gravel and when he found it, the location was not that for which he had started when he left his Jersey home. But he had found the place where gold was. That was what he had started to find.

From that summer until the wear and tear of life compelled him to desist, Joe Sarish mined. Always, just ahead, was the treasure. And there was Joe Sarish, always on its trail. His confidence never weakened; he dug and washed on many bars; always he was certain that he was near his goal; just there, he was sure to find the foot of the rainbow.

From Bannack to Stapleton's bar; then to Alder; from there to Bivens gulch; thence to Ophir gulch and to McKay. Then he drifted to Pioneer; there and at Cataract and Henderson he mined forty years. Here in the gravel of Granite county he worked with the habitual hope of the lifelong prospector. Each year found his hope stronger and his inspiration keener. For had he not worked just so much nearer to the goal which was certainly his.

In these years he made money—lots of it. There were bright colors in his pan many times. But he cared not for the sums he wrested from the gravel in this course; they were all insignificant beside that great treasure which he knew was yet to be his.

And he mined on and on. As long as his strength lasted, he wrought with the pick and the pan which had been his companions for so many years. And, ever, just ahead, was that treasure which he had seen in his vision as he left his Jersey home, years before most of us were born.

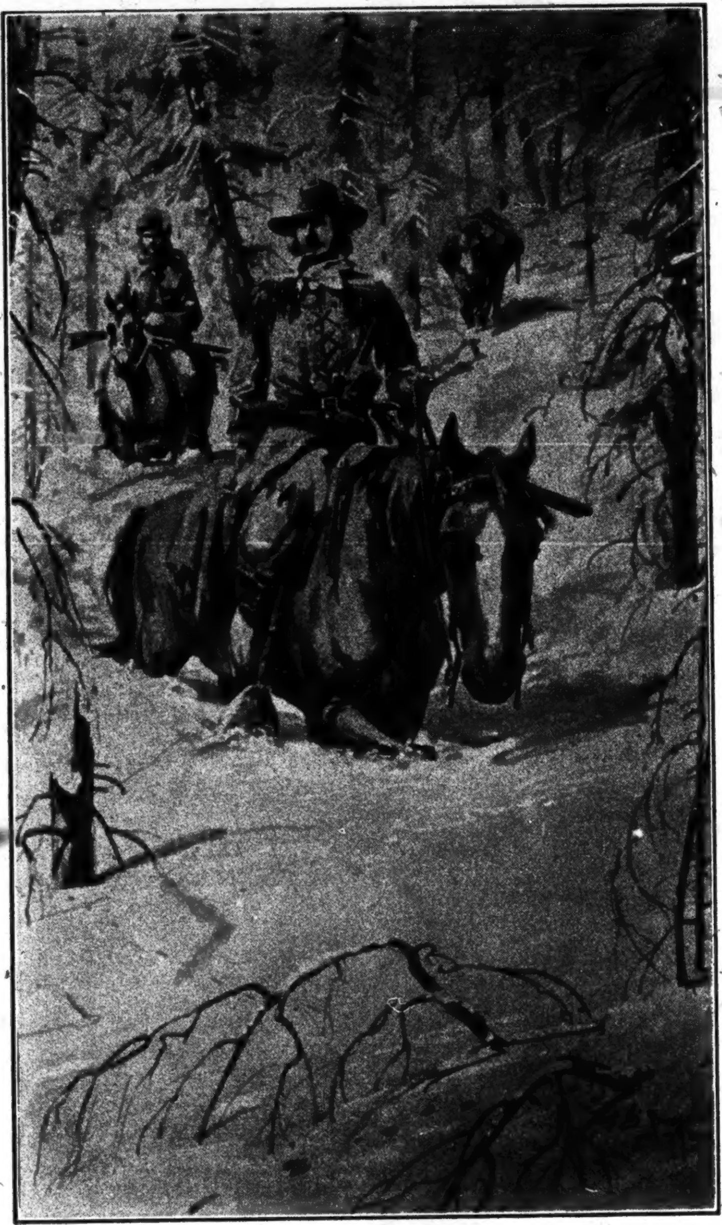
He never found the pot of gold. But let us not say that he found no treasure. For Joe Sarish made many friends, whose loyalty is now his sustaining source; they stay with him and as long as he has them, he has something dearer than gold. And he will always have them.

And Joe Sarish found contentment. He looks back over his years of activity and he knows he gave to the world the best there was in him. He never faltered when duty called; he never sought to evade responsibility. And, as he gave to the world all he had to give—gave it unhesitatingly and without grudging the gift of service—so now the world owes it to him to see that he is comfortable.

I would feel sorry for Joe Sarish if I thought he wanted sympathy or if he needed it. I don't believe he does. I am rather inclined to the belief that he is to be envied. I know of no man who is more thoroughly contented than he. I know of no man who feels more completely independent than does he, dependent though he is upon public bounty. He is a philosopher and his philosophy is of the sunshiny sort. He is an epicurean in a modest kind of way.

But I do feel that the case of Joe Sarish should appeal to the state of Montana to the extent that she make some provision for the proper care of her pioneers.

April 27, 1912.



A Lost Pilgrim —Painting by Paxson.

A LOST PILGRIM

IN HIS studio in Missoula, these days, E. S. Paxson is painting the historical pictures which are to be his contribution to the decoration of the new state capitol. He is working steadily and his heart is in his work. Mr. Paxson has studied Montana history carefully; he has learned Montana geography in many years of travel—horseback and afoot—over her mountains and valleys; his brush has depicted many scenes which have preserved historic incidents which otherwise might have been forgotten; he is splendidly equipped for the performance of the work which has been assigned to him as one of the Montana decorators of the Montana capitol.

Mr. Paxson knows the intimate history of the state well—that history which has been overlooked to a great extent by the men and women who have written of the making of Montana, because it was common and every-day history. In his riding and tramping through Montana, he has picked up a wonderful lot of information. He has old sketches and photographs which are of inestimable value to the student of Montana history. He has a fund of stories which are delightfully interesting to one who likes to know the little things which early Montanans did as well as the big things and how they lived as well as how they fought—there is delight in sitting in the Paxson studio and listening to his comment as he paints.

There are a good many incidents of importance in which Mr. Paxson has had personal part. He doesn't say much about them if he thinks one is taking notes, but when his brush travels over the canvas before him, he is likely to become reminiscent. It was in such a mood that I found him the other day. He told me two or three mighty good stories. Back in the seventies Mr. Paxson lived in "Deer Lodge City on Cottonwood" and he harks back to those days when his thoughts turn reminiscently toward history.

Mr. Paxson was painting a mountain trail as I watched him the other day. It was a real trail and, as I watched him develop the details of the path over the hill, I knew that he was picturing a trail which he had traveled, somewhere and sometime, so perfectly was it fitting into the scene. Nobody could paint a trail like that who had not traveled through Montana hills. Now and then he nodded, as he recalled some new detail of the old path and placed it in the picture.

"All trails look alike to the man who doesn't know the mountains," observed the artist at length, "but when a man is used to them, the trails are as distinct in their individuality as are the streets of a city to the man who is bred in town. It is not easy to get lost in the hills if you know the hills, themselves. But the tenderfoot who seeks to acquaint himself with a trail before he has general knowledge of the mountains—he is pretty sure to lose his bearings. There were lots of fellows lost in the placer stampedes and later just because they didn't know the mountains, even in a general way. And the tenderfoot is usually the most cock-sure fellow in the world until he has had his experience. It takes the school of experience to teach a fellow the ways of the hills. He can't learn them from the telling and he can't learn them from a map."

Back in 1878, Colonel Paxson lived in Deer Lodge. In the fall of that year, he was visited by a brother, Everett, and a friend, Carroll Smith, right from the east. In November, 1878, the colonel and his tenderfoot guests started on a hunting trip. They were going to spend several weeks in the North Boulder country. They had an experience which Paxson told me, by way of illustrating the ways of a tenderfoot on the trail. A young friend of mine, who is also a friend of Mr. Paxson's, heard the story and was interested. She asked if she might not write it for me and I willingly consented. Here is the story as Colonel Paxson and Miss Kettlewell have prepared it:

The party kept in the valley, following the Deer Lodge stream, for some time; then branched off across the bench land; and at nightfall made their camp on Oro Fino creek, a small stream tributary to the Deer Lodge. Next morning they broke camp and pushed on to the northeast; by noon they had reached the first slopes of Dog Creek divide, a range of hills some 20 or 30 miles from Deer Lodge. Here, on the south side of the ridge, they made a temporary camp and looked about for signs of game. In the old snow which had drifted into the gulches the previous winter, they found a promising number of signs of bear, elk and deer. The three hunters felt certain of success and with high expectations crossed the divide. Late in the afternoon they came to the Dry Powder Horn, which empties into the North Boulder. Here, in a cold, drizzly rain, they established what proved to be their permanent camp, though their intentions then were to remain here but a day or two and then work on up to the head of Boulder.

Leaving his brother and Smith to finish making camp and to prepare supper, E. S. Paxson started down the gulch to the mouth of the creek, a half-mile distant. He was anxious to look around a little down there to see what the prospects were for big game. Before he left camp he warned his companions:

"You boys better not come down," he said, "but if you do, don't go beyond the mouth of the creek. You'd probably go back up the wrong gulch and get lost."

Having reached the foot of the gulch where Dry Powder Horn flows into Boulder, he discovered that just below, the larger stream overflowed into a large meadow, where alder trees and willows grew thickly and where beaver dams were numerous. He skirted this meadow, making a circle of perhaps three-quarters of a mile, and noting on his way three or four other small streams flowing down gulches, which were replicas of the one in which the camp was situated. Before he had completed the circuit and come again to the mouth of the creek, the rain had turned to snow and the air was growing unpleasantly chill. By the time he had returned to camp it was snowing fast and the temperature had dropped. He found his brother turning savory strips of bacon which were sizzling in a long-handled pan over the fire. Everett had heard someone coming but had not looked up.

Well, Carroll, I'm glad you're back," he said. "Somehow I had a feeling you ought not to go down there alone."

What, isn't Carroll here? Where'd he go? Down to the creek?

"Oh! That's you, Edgar. Yes, he went just a little after you. I wish he'd come. I'm getting mighty uneasy about him."

"Oh, he'll get back all right. Did you tell him to be careful?"

"Told him the same's you did when you left, and added that he'd better remember he was only a 'pilgrim' and didn't know enough about mountains to run loose in them yet."

In silence the two brothers waited Smith's return. Neither wished to show his anxiety. Everett finished cooking the meal; his brother began to putter with the saddles, making minor, unnecessary repairs. Finally they ate alone. They would not admit that they thought anything was wrong. For more than two hours they sat by the camp fire; it was now so cold that a cup of water a few feet from the blaze would freeze.

"Everett, Carrol's lost. He's gone down there and seen tracks and followed them until dark and, then he's turned around and come up the first gulch he found. No telling where he is now."

"I'm afraid of it. I'm going to take my Winchester down to the mouth and signal him."

Everett rose and walked quickly down the gulch. While his brother was gone, Mr. Paxson cut brush and heaped it upon the fire and gathered wood for the night's supply. Then he found a gigantic dead pine back of the camp and kindled that for a guiding light for the lost man. There was enough pitch in the tree and enough wind blowing to create an immense blaze. The flames leaped higher and higher till it seemed that they must illumine the whole sky. The heat melted the snow for a hundred feet around the base of the tree. Surely Smith would see that and would make his way to camp.

Mr. Paxson waited now for his brother's coming. Almost an hour passed and he did not return. Thoroughly alarmed now lest both of them should be lost, he seized his rifle and ran to the top of the ridge east of the camp. He fired once and waited; way off to the left came a faint answering report. He fired three or four more shots at intervals of 15 minutes and each time the answering shot grew louder until Everett was within hailing distance.

When he had reached the camp fire again he threw himself down on the ground and said weakly. "Well, I'll never leave this camp again alone. I did the very thing Carroll has done."

"Well, we'd better sleep now. Let's fix the fire and turn in. We'll look for Carroll in the morning," suggested Mr. Paxson.

By morning there was over a foot of snow on the ground and more was falling. The horses were pawing through the snow uneasily, in search for their breakfast. As soon as it was daylight the two men started out on horseback to search systematically for Carroll. They rode in great circles, up stream, and down stream, or across stream; they climbed ridges and descended into gullies; all day they huned but not one trace of the missing man could they discover. By nightfall the snow upon the ground had risen to a level two feet. The horses could no longer paw through it to obtain their food. It was evident that the two men were helpless to search farther.

"Everett, we've got to go to Deer Lodge to get help, and feed for the horses. We'll have to start as soon as it's light."

Accordingly, the brothers started back, on the fourth day, across the long stretch of country between the Boulder and Deer Lodge, on which not a trail was visible, across which there was not a thing to guide them save E. S. Paxson's instinct for direction. They were in a wilderness of snow. Every mountain path had long since been choked up; the bench lands stretched for miles and miles trackless and barren wastes, perched here and there by the tops of tall pines and sturdy tamaracks; elevated now and again by low, rolling hills; and unmarked, across all that vast expanse, by the roof of any human being's dwelling.

It was dark before the two riders came out upon the bench, overlooking Deer Lodge, where Montana college now stands. From this point they could see the little settlement lying muffled and silent, with scarce any signs of life save the faint lights which gleamed from its windows and the sparks which shot up into the darkness from its chimneys. But these signs were enough to warm the hearts and reanimate the almost frozen bodies of the two men, for they meant that here at least were help and warmth, and food, and shelter from the bitter cold.

"Thank God, we're going to make it," said E. S. Paxson.

"Yes, it looks that way," responded his brother with a sigh of intense weariness.

The hardships of their ride had been fearful; but it was not of themselves that they were thinking as they slipped numbly from their horses in front of the Scott House and stumbled into the light and warmth of the low-ceiled, smoke-filled room where 15 or 20 men were lounging and discussing the present disagreeable condition of the weather.

"Smith's lost!" The laconic announcement brought every man to his feet at once. They crowded about the two snow-covered men and tried to drag from them their story. The older settlers, especially the genial, jovial "master of the inn," Sam Scott, were inclined to show no great anxiety over the matter, assuring the men that Smith had undoubtedly got out of the hills and was quite safe. The others, however, were unfeignedly alarmed and eagerly agreed to go and help search for him.

Mr. Paxson and his brother were utterly exhausted from lack of sleep and worry, and retired as soon as they had eaten supper and ordered their provisions to be packed for the return trip. The next morning, the snow was still falling and of the eight or ten men who had volunteered their help, not one was willing to start back with them. Not that they didn't want to find Smith, they said, but it would be useless; he'd be dead if they did find him; they'd probably all perish themselves.

Their arguments availed nothing. The horses were standing saddled and packed in front of the hotel. E. S. Paxson left the group and mounted his horse.

"Boys, I'm going," he said.

His brother followed.

"I'm going, too."

"Hold on there, fellows! You musn't go alone. I'll go with you." Nat Evans, one of the bravest and most respected young men in the Deer Lodge valley, had volunteered.

"Well, boys, if I had a horse I'd go, too."

This was Burt Hawley, another fine, sturdy, young settler. Tom Stewart offered him his; and thus the searching party was made up. The four men were well supplied with food and ammunition and carried as many oats as they could crowd into the pack or hang in bags upon their saddles.

At 8 o'clock they were ready. They started, these four, with no interest and no motive but to save a comrade's life. For some miles they rode in silence; they were smothered in snow; the great flakes were falling thick around them; the tracks made by their horses the night before had been entirely filled up. The futileness of their attempt came to Evans forcefully. He voiced his misgivings.

"Edgar, do you really believe you can make your way back to that camp?"

"I got out of there yesterday, all right. I guess I can get back."

That night they camped on Oro Fino. It was frightfully cold, but they found one or two places where their horses could feed. Early the next morning they started on and crossed the Dog Creek divide. When they had almost reached their camp, they began to smell smoke. The Paxsons declared that they had put the fire out before they left and, at any rate, the snow would have done so soon if they had failed to. There could be but one solution; there was but one thought in the minds of all of them. It was that Smith was there.

They descended into the gulch of the Dry Powder Horn and rode joyfully into what had been their camp. But they found no camp fire, no trace of human being. Instead they found a fire smouldering in the grass under the snow. Their hearts sank like lead. But they were brave men, so they set to work. They built a corral for the horses in a grove of cottonwoods. They made their own camp, and for three days, from early morning until late at night they searched. They went in every direction for miles, with unfailing energy and dauntless resolution.

But it had been eight days now since Carroll had disappeared. They knew no man could live more than seven without food. It was evident that their search had been in vain. Their dear comrade had died and they had been unable to rescue him. That last morning dawned clear and beautiful on the Dog Creek hills. The snow clouds had risen and the sun was shining now on the rounded hill tops and glistening in the valleys. The four men started back toward Deer Lodge, a mournful band; and that afternoon they crossed the ridge and came in sight of Deer Lodge valley. For a second time Edgar and Everett Paxson crossed the dreary stretch of snow which now, with the bright sun upon it, would not have been called dreary had it not been for the sadness in their hearts. As the party went down the south slope of Dog creek, their passing scared up a large bunch of antelope upon the left. But the animals were safe, perhaps one or two were shot at, but the men had had hunt enough. Further on, they saw five or six large elk herded together, and once, as they passed a clump of pines, there was a flash of yellow, a blinding sheet of snow and a mountain lion had jumped out almost under the leading horse's feet. There was a hound with the hunters and he gave chase and treed the lion, but the animal jumped and landed in the snow thirty feet from the tree and disappeared.

Then they came to Deer Lodge; it was again night, but the stars were shining and there was bustle and activity in the little town. The four made their way slowly and sadly to the Scott House, but here they were greeted by the smiling, joyful crowd of men. Smith, the lost man, was within, alive!

Yes, he was alive, but that was all. When his four comrades went into the room where he lay weak and demented by his cruel experience, he failed to recognize them. For three weeks he lay in a semi-conscious state; Mr. Paxson and his brother took turns at nursing him, but he did not know either of them; he did not even know what had happened. In his delirium he talked only of "snow—snow—snow—the squirrel—the camp—and snow." But gradually his strength returned; his mind grew clear; he was able to get up and go about his work as before. Then he told them his experiences.

He had done the very thing that Mr. Paxson had surmised. When he reached the mouth of the creek he went a short distance to the west, following the Boulder stream. He saw deer tracks in the fresh snow. He followed them. Fascinated, unheeding, he passed three gulches. It was growing dark, but still he kept on, his gun held in readiness, for every instant he expected to come upon the deer. Suddenly he stopped, for the first time he realized that darkness would be upon him before he could get back to camp. His eyes followed the tracks longingly as far as they could be seen in the gathering dusk; then at last he turned. Then ensued an experience never to be forgotten.

Smith was in the wrong gulch. It was some time before he realized it, but finally he understood. Strange landmarks made it certain. He couldn't lose these queer crags and cliffs. He fled from them only to find himself before them again in a short time.

He was lost. He sank down limply upon a log. Snow was falling in great, white flakes, obscuring everything. He fired his rifle and listened for a response. Again, again; no answering shot. Another, and this time he fancied he heard a response. Madly he rushed through the storm only to learn that his imagination had played him false.

That night he managed to build a fire which kept him alive. The next day he resumed his wandering, half crazed with fear, night bringing him back to the ashes of his fire. That night he was startled by the sound of a rifle shot and he hastened in the direction from which it seemed to come. In his flight he fell into a beaver dam and, thoroughly chilled, he had to go back to his fire. Through the night he half dozed. Daylight found him almost dead with exhaustion and yielding to torpor which he knew would be fatal.

He was freezing to death. His solitude was broken by the incessant scolding of a pine squirrel. The little creature had come out from his hole to investigate this new world of snow. He had run along the ground under the log and there he had found something he had never seen before—something that didn't belong there. He began to scold. Then he barked. The man stirred, opened his eyes and looked around crossly to see what was disturbing his rest. He wanted to sleep. When Smith moved, the squirrel fled and all was quiet again. The man fell asleep almost instantly and would never have wakened had it not been for the squirrel, who again came out of his hole and began to chatter more persistently than before. Smith awakened. He was indignant. He spied the squirrel and reached quickly for his gun. "I'll bet I'll fix that thing so it won't bother me," he muttered. He shot and the little creature dropped upon the snow. Smith rose and mechanically picked it up. He held it in his hand. He was sorry he had killed it. Then, like a flash came the thought into his numb consciousness: "This is food. I can eat it."

Like a cannibal, he tore the tiny body into pieces and, like a cannibal, ate the warm flesh. Then he felt thirsty, so he went slowly to the creek at the foot of the gulch and stooped to drink. The food had revived him; he could think and feel more clearly now; and as he stood there, a possible means of saving himself dawned upon him.

"You fool," he said to himself, "follow the creek. It will take you somewhere out of these hills."

So he staggered into the creek and on and on, as though in a dream. He was no longer weary; he didn't know he was lost; it was not his own will but nature that was compelling him to go on. He stopped frequently to rest and once, as he sat upon the bank, he saw a mink in the water's edge and stopped to watch it for half an hour with childlike intensity of interest.

But as he had thought, the stream would take him somewhere; so he came out at least sixty miles from the camp on the Dry Powder Horn, to the place where they had been building a stage station on the route between Dillon and Helena. Here were one or two cabins, the first signs of civilization Smith had seen since he left Deer Lodge nine days before.

With his last ounce of strength he plowed through the snow to the nearest cabin, opened the door and stumbled in, begging for food. The settler's wife was alone in the cabin at the time. For an instant she was terror-stricken. Smith was wild-eyed and haggard, his blue flannel blouse was torn almost to shreds, and the soles of his shoes were worn quite away. Then she immediately guessed that this was Smith, the lost man, who had been reported in the valley; she prepared for him some simple, nourishing food. She knew she dared not give him all he craved. He devoured what was set before him and was wild for more. He would have fought for more had not the woman's husband and a companion come into the cabin at that moment. They grabbed Smith and with unnatural energy he struggled with them for a few minutes. Then he collapsed. They tried to question him; he could tell them nothing. He did not remember his name and declared, over and over again: "No, I'm not lost. I'm hungry."

The settlers cared for him tenderly and the next morning took him on the stage back to Deer Lodge, where a few hours later the friends who had given him up for dead, found him.

This is the story as Mr. Paxson told it and his young friend wrote it. It is a story which is of the every-day life of the pioneer and on that account valuable. Of the principals of the tale, all but one are yet in active life in Montana. Mr. Paxson lives among admiring and appreciative neighbors in Missoula. His brother died in 1905. Carroll Smith is high in the service of the Anaconda Copper Mining company. Bert Hawley is a prominent farmer in the Bitter Root.

April 7, 1912.

HISTORIC TRAILBLAZING

THERE lies on my desk, as I write, a letter which is old but which has preserved through 30 years its interest and which, viewed in this long perspective, seems even more impressive, probably, than it did when it was received in Missoula in the spring of 1883. It is a letter written by the man who made the first exploration of the western Montana mountain passes to ascertain the feasibility of railway construction which should unite Puget sound with St. Paul—Lieutenant Mullan.

The letter was written after the retirement of this renowned trailblazer. He had an office in Washington at the time and the communication was addressed to F. L. Worden, the founder of Missoula, and one of the comrades of Lieutenant Mullan during the years he spent in this region. The letter was, primarily, a business communication, but it contains paragraphs which are historically interesting.

"You say," writes Lieutenant — then Captain — Mullan, "when the N. P. R. R. is completed, to give you a call. I expect to do so.

"You say: 'Just to think that 20-odd years ago, you and I were struggling through Hell Gate canyon, never dreaming of making the trip in Pullman sleepers.' Now, my dear sir, permit me to say that, if there was ever any conviction firmly lodged in my mind, it was the conviction that the day was coming when a line of Pullman sleepers would cross down through Hell Gate canyon. With me it was more than a dream—it was a conviction. It was for that purpose that our surveys were made and our wagon-road construction was conceived and, under my direction, were executed and, while there were plenty of persons who, 25 or 30 years ago, conceived that I had a mania on wagon roads and railroads, yet I thought I could see in the distance, coursing across the plains from Minnesota to Oregon, by the northern route, through the Mullan pass and down the Hell Gate canyon, this same line of Pullman sleepers, making an overland trip from St. Paul to the Columbia in five days, so that now, when we are on the eve of realizing the benefits of this overland construction, you can well imagine that my heart wells up with gladness at seeing realized one of the fondest germs of my life and fulfillment of so many years of hard and patient toil in the mountains, where I was so largely a pioneer, 30 years ago.

"I watch constantly the developments in your section of Montana, because there is no strip of the continent to which I am more wedded than the strip which includes the Rocky mountains of Montana, particularly the Bitter Root valley, my home in '53-4, and your town of Missoula, where time and again I have camped with not a house within 100 miles and where I crossed the Hell Gate river in '54 amidst circumstances that vividly call to mind the dangers and disasters attending my little party while crossing the swollen stream during the June and July freshets of '54.

"When I took hold of the celebrated land case of the settlers in the Bitter Root valley against the N. P. R. R. Co., in which I succeeded in wresting from said company that entire valley and dedicating it to the permanent homes of the settlers then residing therein, it is no want of modesty in me to say that I threw into said case my whole spirit and zeal, because of the attachment I had for the early pioneers in that valley, which is the gem of the mountains.

"I look forward to the completion of this road at the end of the next six months, and if it is not impossible at that time, I shall visit your section of the country on a flying trip to the Pacific, and, if not then, at some future time when it will suit my convenience and my business."

When I started to copy these paragraphs, I intended to reproduce only the first two, as they deal with the blazing of the trail which Mullan explored and established, but the rest of the letter seemed to me so characteristic of the writer, as I pictured him from the descriptions which I have had from those who were his intimates and from what I know of his work in this region, that I have given them all.

Missoula and the Bitter Root country have and always should have a lively local interest in Lieutenant Mullan. During all the years of his exploration and in the subsequent construction period, he made his headquarters in this region. His first permanent winter camp was Cantonment Stevens, located near where Corvallis now stands. From there he conducted his reconnaissances to ascertain the depth of the snowfall on the mountain passes and his observation of altitudes. His construction camps were located all the way along the river between Missoula and the summit of the Coeur d'Alene pass.

It is the testimony of those who knew Lieutenant Mullan intimately, confirmed by the deliberate judgment of Governor

Stevens, and borne out by the accuracy of the reports which he made, that he was an indefatigable worker, a conscientious zealot and an inspiring enthusiast. The second paragraph of his letter, which I have quoted, substantiates this verdict; it shows the earnestness of the man and reveals the sincerity of his purpose.

The first trail which the Stevens explorers were shown by the Indians was that which led from the Bitter Root up the Blackfoot, across the Cadotte pass, to Fort Benton. This was the Indian trail to the buffalo country; it was the route which the red men recommended to the pioneers in the quest of a way across the mountains. It was the natural way, perhaps, but it did not suit Lieutenant Mullan. He felt certain that there was an easier crossing of the divide and he looked about until he found it. And so we have the Mullan pass.

It was in 1853 that the Stevens expedition made its first trip through this region. Its purpose was two-fold. The exploration was expected to develop a northern transcontinental route and Governor Stevens was laying the foundations for the treaties with the Indian tribes which would make the construction as peaceable as possible. The second expedition entered Montana from the west, two years later, and it was crowned with complete success; we have seen how satisfactorialy Governor Stevens dealt with the Indian tribes on both sides of the range.

Upon Lieutenant Mullan developed the responsibility of the exploration of the region which is now western Montana. He explored every Indian trail he could find; he took observations and made careful measurements; he studied the Indians, the animals, the vegetation, the water supply—there was nothing which was overlooked which could in any way contribute to the useful information regarding the proposed railway route.

Western Montana owes much to the devoted service of this man. The whole west is his debtor, but that obligation seems to me to rest more heavily upon our neighborhood than upon any other section. He was one of our people.